THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Man In The New Humanism

BY

SISTER MARY VINCENT KILLEEN, O.P.

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
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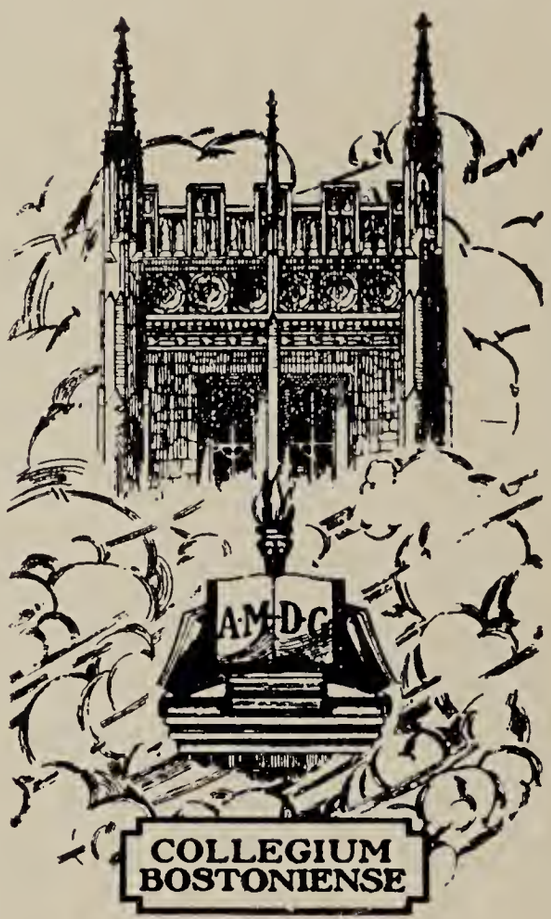

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PREFACE

One of the tasks of philosophy in any age is to examine and to evaluate the thought of its day. In America today there are several movements of thought all claiming the name of Humanism yet varying greatly in doctrine. It is the purpose of this study to examine these movements by going to what should be the core of their teachings. I have attempted to present their concept of man.

This study gives particular emphasis to the Humanism of Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More. A final chapter on the Scholastic concept of man has been added in order that the partial aspects of this concept employed in evaluating the separate humanistic groups may be seen in their organic setting.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Right Reverend E. A. Pace, Very Reverend Ignatius Smith, O.P., and Reverend Fulton J. Sheen for their helpful criticism and suggestions; to Reverend Leo Richard Ward, C.S.C., who directed my first work in this field; and to my own Dominican Sisters of the Congregation of St. Mary at New Orleans, who made my studies possible and to whom this volume is affectionately dedicated.

INTRODUCTION

Practically every study that we have examined and that deals with Humanism in our present day begins with an admission, almost a complaint, that the term Humanism itself is not very amenable to strict definition. We are faced with the same difficulty. By way of introduction to our special task of examining the concept of man in the various types of American Humanism, we shall try to show what Humanism has meant in the past and how its present day exponents would define it.

If Humanism has stood for anything very definite in history and if it means anything that can be defined very precisely today, further questions will be warranted. Has Humanism maintained a uniform definition throughout the centuries that have seen its inception and its development? Is the Humanism of our era a part of this development or is it an independent growth? These questions have been put in another way in the inquiry, Is the renaissance of Humanism one with the humanism of the Renaissance? We may anticipate our answer by stating here that interest in man seems to be the only unifying principle that joins all types in the common name of Humanism.

The term Humanism is a fluid one. Until recently it recalled the days when Scholasticism was eclipsed by a new intellectual impulse called humanism which invited the leading minds to a free and more general culture. This intellectual force of which Dante was the forerunner, started probably with Petrarch and his friend Boccaccio and was mainly a literary one. At the very inception of the movement these men were warm advocates of the ancient stylists, and their enthusiasm proved infectious among the Florentines. There was the study of the classical authors, at first Latin and later also Greek, for their own sakes. These masters of verse and prose had never been forgotten in the Middle Ages, but they had been relegated to a place of secondary importance. Humanism was an attempt to reproduce their thoughts, their style and their sentiments in the actual world of the day.

These scholars, too numerous to be named, arrogated to themselves the name of Humanists as being the accredited professors

of the *literae humaniores,* or the literature of the classic tongues, to the study of which they devoted themselves almost exclusively. Some went further still and cast overboard not only the medieval writers, but the very books of the Gospel. They made shipwreck of the Faith and became pagans in belief and conduct. Had the Renaissance remained faithful to the Christian ideals that ever shone before the eyes of its best representatives this need not have been. In many cases it was only a matter of language, and the affected diction that spoke of the gods and Olympus hid souls that really believed in Christ and His saints. The new learning was by no means incompatible with Christian faith though the latter was to some extent endangered as the conduct of many humanists shows. In their avoidance of the *literae divinae* and their enthusiasm for antiquity many were led to exchange, in whole or in part, the Christian world view for the old pagan philosophy, or at least to profess a scepticism not far removed from it. Others lost the moral balance which Christian education had secured for them and sank to the level of ancient profligacy. Yet there were those that found in the revival of letters a flowering out of the literary bulbs which had been set aside, yet none the less preserved, during the Middle Ages, until an appropriate spring. They proved that all genuine learning can thrive in an environment wholly Christian.

The distinction between these classes of old humanists is very deep and should never be forgotten. The one strove to give a classic form to the Christian civilization then in existence; the other sought to pluck it up by the roots, and to plant the old heathen culture in its place. That the Renaissance was a reaction cannot be denied, but that it was totally adverse to the Christian culture of the Middle Ages cannot be maintained except insofar as the movement as a whole is identified with the surrender to the pagan conception of man. Yet too often even conservative historians, perhaps unwittingly, have drawn this fallacious conclusion. Subsequent religious and social trends are, however, responsible in a large measure for this persistent error. If the Middle Ages were preoccupied with theology it was not because they were less concerned about man, but because they believed that man's highest concern should be to prepare himself for the vision of God. They sought to enhance rather than to

degrade the dignity of man, though all the while they were cognizant of man's inherited weaknesses. Any age may sin by excess, yet its error is not necessarily rectified by a swerve to the opposite extreme. A modern humanist[1] has told us that "In its essence the Renaissance is a protest against the time when there was too much divinity and not enough humanity, against the starving and stunting of certain sides of man by medieval theology, against a vision of the supernatural that imposed a moral constraint upon his more purely human and natural faculties." Yet another thinker of our day was convinced that ". . . an understanding of the religious philosophy which preceded the Renaissance makes the essential unity of all philosophy since seem at once obvious. It all rests on the same conception of the nature of man and exhibits the same inability to realize the meaning of the dogma of Original Sin.[2]

The two divergent types of Humanism that took delight in the revival of classical language and lore were marked even in the initial stages of the revival. Petrarch insisted:

> We may love the schools of the philosophers and agree with them only when they are in accordance with the truth, and when they do not lead us astray from our true end. Should anyone attempt to do this, were he even Plato or Aristotle, Varro or Cicero, we must firmly and constantly despise and reject him. Let no subtlety of arguments, no grace of speech, no renown, ensnare us; they were but men, learned, so far as mere human erudition can go, brilliant in eloquence, endowed with the gifts of nature, but deserving pity inasmuch as they lacked the highest and effable gift. . . . Let us admire their intellectual gifts, but in such wise as to reverence the Creator of these gifts. . . . We must be Christians—then we may be what we will. We must read philosophical, poetical and historical works in such manner that the Gospel of Christ shall ever find an echo in our hearts. . . . On the Gospel alone as on the one immovable foundation, can human diligence build all true learning.[3]

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[1] I. Babbitt, *Literature and the American College.* (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1908), 13.

[2] T. E. Hulme, *Speculations* (London, Kegan Paul, 1924) 12.

[3] Quoted in *The History of the Popes* by Ludwig von Pastor (London, John Hodges, 1891 Eng. Trans.) I, 1, from *Ep. rer. famil.* vi. 2 ed. Fracasetti (Firenze, 1864).

Now there were many such humanists who were guided by similar standards; to mention only a few we might cite, Rudolph Agricola (Huysmann) (1443-1485) who zealously promoted the study of the classics in Germany; Vittorino da Feltre (1397-1446) noted educator and devout churchman; Alandro Girolamo (1480-1542) lecturer in Greek, Latin and Hebrew at the University of Paris and later rector there; Jacopo Sadoleto (1477-1547) poet, orator, theologian and philosopher; Marco Girolamo Vida (1490-1566) author of the Christian epic *Christias,* also of *De Arte Poetica;* Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494) the young paragon of learning whose erudition is one of the marvels of history; Alexander Hegius (1433-1498) priest and scholar; Blessed Thomas More (1478-1535) scholar and martyr, author of *Utopia;* Blessed John Fisher (1459-1535) the learned martyr-cardinal; Juan Luis Vives (1492-1540) Spanish humanist and philosopher; Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522) the promoter of Hebrew studies; and last but not least Desiderius Erasmus (1446-1536) who was regarded by his contemporaries as a prince in the realm of learning.

If Petrarch be rightly regarded as the prototype of the fifteenth century Christian Humanism, his friend Boccaccio might be said to have set a precedent for the pagan trend, though he himself repented the vileness of his works and died in the communion of the Church. But there were others eager to take up the torch and in their zeal for ancient aesthetics found beauty only in ancient vice. They held up to man a mirror that revealed only his bestiality; in the name of classicism they incited him to throw off the restraint which Christian morality had imposed upon him and give vent to his expansive desires. We need only mention Valla and Beccadelli as examples of this type. Many of their disciples imbibed their philosophy of life apart from any appreciation of the classic age whence they had resurrected it. Thus it happened that in addition to the two opposed branches of Humanism which were devoted to classical studies there were innumerable individuals who answered to the name of humanist, who knew little of culture but enjoyed a loose life; just as there were others who sought the old learning merely for learning's sake—whose lives were not affected for better or worse by their translations or cultivation of classic forms. The term "humanist"

even in that day had a hazy meaning in the abstract. Apart from the dominant interest in man and man's work, especially in glorious Greece and in grand old Rome, there was no one unifying principle to make this Humanism amenable to stricter definition. Norman Foerster has a good chapter[4] on the confusion inseparable from the diverse applications of the name "humanist" even in the Renaissance period; and we have found that standard sources, like Symonds and Burkhardt, make little attempt to dispel this confusion.

But there was an underlying spiritual disunity and conflict in Humanism that led inevitably to the disintegration of the culture of the Renaissance; and though subsequent generations were to idealize moderation, the *via media,* as the keynote of genuine Humanism, this ideal was arrived at by the law of averages rather than by a complete enumeration of professed humanists. Yet it is this quality of proportionateness, most representative of the best humanists, that has been most neglected, and perilously so, by tributary currents of thought having their source in Humanism itself. While the Renaissance marked the self-discovery, self-realization, and self-exaltation of man, it also glimpsed the beginnings of discovery, realization and exaltation of the material means which would offer man a fuller life. Man, self-emancipated and blindly exulting in his new freedom from the theological restraint, was to witness the day when he would be overpowered by what he thought were only instruments of escape. When scientific naturalism dared to order him as it did all other things, man discovered that by his self-affirmation he had denied the spiritual foundation of his freedom, his knowledge and his dignity, and hence would have to submit to the "law for thing" while hoping to find a new basis to guarantee his supremacy and liberty. In the interim philosophy wandered through the rationalism of Descartes and the empiricism of Locke to the radical scepticism of Hume. When Kant sought to direct it to a saner path and salvage knowledge for man, he only led the way to the labyrinth of subjectivism and the make-believe world of Vaihinger's *Als Ob.* In science, economics, and politics man as man had fared no

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[4] N. Foerster, *Towards Standards* (New York, Farrar and Rinehart, 1930).

better—all tended to reduce him to a cog in the machine. If at times he tried to reassert his personal rights he was bandied into believing that the license warranted by naturalism was more than a fair exchange for a liberty hampered by religious codes. Rousseau revolted against social institutions, yet man lost, rather than gained, by the proclamation of his natural goodness; Comte sought to make a religion of naturalism—and there are some today that do not accuse him of folly; Nietzsche held out the hope of the Super-Man to a dying Humanism in a declining West; yet man was unsatisfied.

In our century we find man clamoring for a revaluation of human things. The programs suggested are varied. Some claim that naturalism itself holds the key to the master value and that man should glory in the part he is allowed to play in bringing humanity to the acme of its evolution; others tell man to create his own values and so find happiness here and now; others again, perceiving a duality in man's nature, assert the existence of a law, not of man's lower urges, seeming ultimately divine, yet certainly pointing to genuinely human worth. (Need we mention here that the true Christian has experienced none of the gropings because he has kept the medieval tradition intact?)

Thus it is that when a European pragmatist sets out to write a new logic, when a well meaning stoic ventures a preface to morals, when a critical realist predicts the next step for a religion that has come of age, when ministers put aside the Evangelists to preach a more humane gospel, when a revered educator gives up his quest for ultimate certainty, when literary critics look for ethical standards, they all do so in the name of Humanism. Why do they? Does the word itself act as a charm and win proselytes? Does it flatter man and thereby placate the modern temper? Is the modern renaissance of Humanism one with the Humanism of the Renaissance? Has the word a new, yet distinct and precise meaning today? An exponent of one contemporary brand writes

> The name which we give to this new developing system of thought is Humanism, and by so naming it we greatly disturb the feelings of the more exact among our historians. It creates confusion, they say. For the term Humanism has a very precise meaning, it alludes to a re-awakening of interest in classic culture,

> which took place in the fifteenth century. Hence we should not use the word except in reference to this particular event. This is all the more necessary, because there is a sharp contrast between the two movements. Fifteenth century Humanism looked back, in the hope of restoring some of the lost values of the past; twentieth century Humanism looks forward, creating its values as it progresses. It is a new thing, and it would be better served if we could find a new name for it.[5]

Foerster and some others of the Babbitt-More school claim a continuity with the Renaissance yet others in the same camp disclaim this descent. Recently Professor Louis J. A. Mercier has reiterated the former contention. He says

> The humanist movement was from the first pregnant with all the contradictions which issued from the confrontation of Christian and pagan thought and which have remained to this day unreconciled. But, in the light of our present controversies, it should be clear that our renaissance of humanism is one with the humanism of the Renaissance.[6]

And further on

> By definition, there is really nothing new about it, nothing in fact which the man in the street does not take for granted as immediate data of consciousness. It merely asserts that there is such a thing as "man as such." . . . This should remain sharply defined at it comes to us historically: humanism versus naturalism; and humanity conceived as made up of individual, personal, autonomous beings, distinct from the rest of nature, versus the identification of man with either as spiritual or material All-One; spiritual-material dualism versus a spiritual or a material monism.[7]

It is clear that these authors cannot be talking about the same thing. In fact Mercier adds a footnote on the last quoted page ". . . the 'humanism, a new religion,' of Dr. C. F. Potter and other former Unitarians is the very antithesis of humanism as Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More understand it, since Dr.

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[5] J. A. F. Auer, *Humanism States Its Case* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1933), 4.

[6] L. J. A. Mercier, *The Challenge of Humanism* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1933), 8.

[7] *Ibid.* 14.

Potter's doctrine is an extreme development of naturalism." Yet such is the confusion in the public mind that only the initiated can steer his way through the net-work of antithetical branches of identically named ways. Let us examine, for example, the only deportment which Walter Lippmann recommends to modern man.

> Insofar as men have now lost their belief in a heavenly king, they have to find some other ground for their moral choices than his will. It follows necessarily that they must find the tests of righteousness wholly within human experience. The difference between good and evil must be a difference which men themselves recognize and understand. Happiness cannot be the reward of virtue; it must be the intelligible consequent of it. It follows, too, that virtue cannot be commanded; it must be willed out of personal conviction and desire. Such a morality may be properly called humanism, for it is not centered in superhuman but in human nature. When men can no longer be theists, they must, if they are civilized, become humanists. They must live by the premise that whatever is righteous is inherently desirable because experience will demonstrate its desirability. They must live, therefore, in the belief that the duty of man is not to make his will conform to the will of God, but to the surest knowledge of the conditions of human happiness.[8]

Is this Babbitt's Humanism, or the Humanism to which Potter, Dewey, Sellars and Reese subscribe? Mr. Lippmann does not say. It is true that he is writing only a preface—but who is going to write the orthodox morality of Humanism? We should pause to weigh the conflicting claims.

> (1) Humanism is a philosophy that interprets man within the setting of the organic conception of the nature of reality.
>
> (2) Humanism is a philosophy of life that puts human nature at the center of the processes of knowledge, not as constituting but as conditioning the understanding of reality.
>
> (3) Humanism is a philosophy of the natural rather than the transcendental, the human rather than the cosmic nature and location of values.
>
> (4) Humanism is a philosophy of human control in contrast to all forms of fatalistic determinism as applied to human situations, and all forms of laissez faire as applied to social situations.

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[8] W. Lippmann *A Preface to Morals* (New York, Macmillan, 1929), 137.

> (5) Humanism is a philosophy of human well-being on the basis of man's inherent needs and aspirations, whether biological or mental, material or spiritual.[9]

Thus a leader of one of the modern groups distinguishes his antidote to mechanism, on the one hand, and to theism on the other. Quite different is the Humanism led by Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More. In the language of this group the term still connotes a renewed interest in the past, but, as Gorman Munson tells us, it "is not essentially or solely a literary school. It offers a comprehensive critique of modern civilization: it has studied our problems of education, politics, manners, morals and science, as well as literary tendency: it is preëminently concerned with the question, *how to live,* and it believes that it has the commencement of a sound program for the intelligent conduct of life."[10] This type of Humanism claims that man can derive from his knowledge and understanding of the past, standards of completeness and proportion and of that which is typically human; moreover, he can and must conform to these by disciplining and restraining his expansive desires. These humanists are opposed to the works of such men as Dreiser, Mencken and Cabell for whom all idealism is futile. They do not believe with the behaviorists, and the scientists on whose doctrine mechanism is based, that man is governed entirely by the laws of nature.

We have distinguished the two main types of contemporary Humanism. If we were asked what these have in common with the Humanism of the Renaissance we might note that while one—the so-called religious Humanism described by Reese above—shifts the emphasis in religion from God to man who, though continuous with lower nature, exhibits a higher freedom; the other—that of Babbitt and More—still connotes a renewed interest in the past, shifts emphasis back to man, not from the superhuman but rather from the subhuman level.

The special purpose of this study is to examine the concept of man in the various types of contemporary American Humanism but before we can do so it is necessary to discover what the types are and how they have evolved.

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[9] C. W. Reese, *Humanist Religion* (New York, Macmillan, 1931), 27ff.

[10] G. B. Munson, *The Dilemma of the Liberated* (New York, Coward-McCann, 1930), viii.

CHAPTER I

The New Humanism in America

It has been remarked that the term humanism is a fluid one; perhaps it will not be straining the metaphor to add that those who plunged into its stream have emerged not only in different degrees of saturation, but, as it were dripping heterogeneous definitions of its nature. A glance at only one or two lists of the names of some men who have been called humanists will quickly indicate the confusion and bewilderment confronting the average inquirer of the meaning of a term that enjoyed great journalistic prominence in 1930 and is now more quietly but none the less persistently prevalent in philosophy, in literature, in religion today. One "inclusive roster of Humanists in recent years" reads:[1]

> Lord Balfour, Havelock Ellis, Walter Rathenau, Paul E. More, Irving Babbitt, T. S. Eliot, Robert Frost, Norman Foerster, Albert Einstein, Radindranath Tagore, Arthur Compton, Robert Millikan, Professor Michelson, Charles E. Beard, Walter Lippmann, Arthur E. Morgan, Frank J. Mather, Jr., William L. Phelps, Everett Dean Martin, G. R. Elliot, Gorman B. Munson, Lewis Mumford, Harry H. Clark, Alan R. Thompson, Sherlock B. Gass, Richard L. Brown, Robert Shafer, Bernard Bandler, II, Stanley P. Chase, H. G. Wells, Owen Young, J. Middleton Murry, Seward Collins.

Another author[2] in introducing his work says:

> In this volume reference is made to all of the prominent humanists.
>
> Prof. John Dewey is given the distinction of being the father of the Chicago and Columbia groups. It might not be very acceptable to name the children, so a list may be given without reckoning with the intellectual parentage.

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[1] J. G. Frederick, *Humanism as a Way of Life* (New York, The Business Bourse, 1930).

[2] W. P. King (Ed.),*Humanism—Another Battle Line* (Nashville, Cokesbury Press, 1931), 7.

There are Prof. Irving King, Dr. Edward Scribner Ames, the late Dr. George B. Foster, Dr. A. E. Haydon, Prof. M. C. Otto, Prof. R. W. Sellars, Mr. Walter Lippmann, Dr. J. H. Dietrich, Mr. Curtis W. Reese, Dr. F. C. Potter, Dr. John Haynes Holmes, Mr. Bertrand Russell, Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch, Dr. Paul Elmer More, Prof. Irving Babbitt, Mr. Durant Drake, Prof. H. N. Wieman, Dr. Durkheim and Mr. Dreiser.

This enumeration is far from being exhaustive and represents a wide divergence of views.

Other authors prefer not to mention names in anything like a fixed roll call; they would rather single out the doctrines of one man or at least of a unified group, and wisely so, because interest in man seems to be the only principle of unity among those who are called or who call themselves humanists. It would be futile to try to compile a list of all who would fit in that category for all men are in varying extents interested in man.

Nevertheless, at this point we must indicate some of the leaders of the various twentieth century American groups which march under the banner of Humanism.

As early as 1903 the English philosopher Ferdinand C. S. Schiller published a book entitled *Humanism*[3] which put the word before the public for the first time in the new century. Schiller's philosophy is a form of pragmatism which, he says, can evolve extensive reforms. Too long has philosophy been the sole concern of the recluse and it has not entered the field of practical life, yet, Schiller says, the final theory of life should be every man's concern. The world, according to him, is a set of formless matter which becomes what men make of it, since the form depends on man, who enriches or extends reality. Reality is not something complete and perfect, but it is evolved by our knowledge, hence truth is not, but it is becoming. The utility of our knowledge is the motive which induces us to accept that which is practical and useful as the truth. Usefulness is the criterion of truth. There is no reality apart from our knowledge: Truth is not objective, but it is something made by man or humanity, that is why Schiller calls his philosophy humanistic.

Such a philosophy prefers Protagoras to Plato and other great

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[3] F. S. C. Schiller, *Humanism* (London, Macmillan, 1903).

thinkers. Man for it too, is the measure of all things, of things that are that they are; and of things that are not that they are not. Yet such too is the pragmatism of William James to whom Schiller dedicated his volume. The word "pragmatism" was first used by Charles Peirce (1839-1914) in an article in the *Popular Science Monthly,* in January 1878: "How to Make Our Ideas Clear." Mr. Peirce had said that our beliefs are really rules for action and that to develop a thought's meaning, we need only determine what conduct it is fitted to produce: that conduct is for us its sole significance. This is the principle of pragmatism which James applied in 1898 to religion. It is the principle running through all his subsequent writings and which was formally enunciated in his volume[4] bearing that title which was published in 1907, the same year in which Schiller's second book on Humanism appeared.[5] Schiller always contended that James had made an unhappy choice in the title of his philosophy. A letter from Mrs. James to Schiller after James' death intimates that James himself in later years regretted his selection.

Pragmatism was recognized abroad as the typical American philosophy. Its tenets were embodied with slight modifications in the instrumentalism of John Dewey. Before long this theory seemed palatable even in some religions which had lost or were losing their taste for God. Men who had been trained in the naturalism and the positivism of Comte had long been trying to make their remnants of Christian tradition square with their philosophical conclusions or to find a nice method of discarding tradition without being dubbed irreligious. Here was a philosophy, thoroughly naturalistic, yet allowing each to formulate his own creed.

The new religion chose an old name. Because the philosophy underlying it was unique to each man professing it, and man instead of God was to be its center of reference, it was called Humanism. It was a philosophy that would "humanize" religion. Curtis Reese in his preface to a symposium of Humanist Sermons[6] thus explains the choice of the name:

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[4] W. James, *Pragmatism* (London, Longmans Green, 1907).
[5] F. C. S. Schiller, *Studies in Humanism* (New York, Macmillan, 1907).
[6] C. Reese (Ed.), *Humanist Sermons* (Chicago, Open Court, 1927), v.

> Humanism has been used to designate certain thought movements which in varying degrees have centered attention on the study, the worth and the enhancement of human life.
>
> Sophist Humanism, in the fifth century B. C., turned attention from cosmological speculation to the study of man. Renaissance Humanism, beginning in the fourteenth century, flooded the dark ages with the light of classical learning, thus assisting mightly in transforming the medieval into the modern world. Encyclopedic Humanism, in the second half of the eighteenth century, fought error, fostered enlightenment and magnified human desires and aspirations. In current history, philosophical Humanism puts human nature at the center of the knowledge process and defines value in terms of the relation of things to human living; scientific Humanism investigates cosmic behavior with view to using and controlling it for human ends; educational Humanism relates the power of knowledge to the needs of life; and religious humanism grounds spirituality in human living, thus contrasting sharply with superhuman, supernatural and absolutistic value-schemes.

The Unitarians practically accepted Humanism as a group. They found it more convenient, more in accord with the modern temper to preach a religion without God, or in which God is relegated to a position of minor concern and in which man is the prime interest. Dr. J. H. Dietrich was probably one of the first to apply the term Humanism to the antitheistic religion.

We have said that the principles of pragmatism form the basis of the instrumentalism of John Dewey. It was under his leadership that men who soon began to call themselves Humanists applied its teachings to humanitarian projects, particularly in the field of education. Though Dewey himself was late in openly marching in humanistic ranks, he could not fail to see that the logical outcome of his immediate empiricism and naturalistic instrumentalism placed him in line with men who had rejected theism and were satisfied to be called adherents of Humanism.

Dr. Curtis W. Reese of Abraham Lincoln Center, Chicago, has been preaching Humanism for many years and has a large following. In 1926 he wrote a small volume entitled *Humanism*[7] and a year later edited a volume of *Humanist Sermons*[8] contributed by eighteen preachers. In the preface of the latter Dr.

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[7] C. W. Reese, *Humanism* (Chicago, Open Court, 1926).

[8] C. W. Reese (Ed.), *Humanist Sermons* (Chicago, Open Court, 1927).

Reese summarizes the doctrines of religious Humanism. This summary, together with the sermons that follow, marks the first attempt at an organized manifesto of the new religion. Dr. Reese's *Humanist Religion*[9] is the latest publication from that quarter.

A separate and more secular movement under the leadership of Dr. Charles Francis Potter loudly voiced the need of a more humane religion. In 1929 Dr. Potter founded *The First Humanist Society of New York.* He, too, had published a volume entitled *Humanism*[10] and kept his Manhattan following awake and alert for his every utterance. His latest work, *Humanizing Religion*[11] contains a copy of a formal manifesto drawn up and signed by thirty-two Humanists. We shall have occasion to quote this document in detail in another chapter. Here it suffices to say that this Humanist Manifesto marks the coalition of the various types of Humanists listed above and is signed by such leaders as John Dewey, Roy Wood Sellars, Reese and Potter. This recent book of Potter's is more than a commentary on the manifesto; it aims to tell us how Education, Economics, Politics, Music and Art—and all else that, according to Dr. Potter constitute Religion—may be humanized. Another publication, written by J. A. F. Auer,[12] also one of the signers of the manifesto, amplifies that statement and answers objections to the humanist platform.

There are many other men who, like Walter Lippmann, and those whose cause he pleads in his *Preface to Morals,*[13] accept many, if not all, of the doctrines of Humanism yet who do not belong to any definite humanist society or congregation. These are the bulk of men who swell the ranks of the so-called Humanists. They form the nameless legion that are supposed to justify the universal statements of the beliefs, difficulties and hopes of Modern Man.

We must now turn to examine another and largely different movement which achieved great journalistic popularity in 1930

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[9] C. W. Reese, *Humanist Religion* (Chicago, Open Court, 1931).

[10] C. F. Potter, *Humanism* (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1929).

[11] C. F. Potter, *Humanizing Religion* (New York, Harpers, 1933).

[12] J. A. F. Auer, *Humanism States Its Case* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1933).

[13] W. Lippmann, *A Preface to Morals* (New York, Macmillan, 1929).

but which had been living and growing steadily with the twentieth century. Even before the century dawned Irving Babbitt recognized the insufficiency of naturalism and sought to work out a philosophy of life on a plane that surpassed the level of naturalism without committing itself to the heights of supernatural religion.[14] In the introduction to his own first book,[15] *Literature and the American College, A Defence of the Humanities,* Professor Babbitt answered the question What is Humanism?, with a definition wholly consonant with the one which he set forth in a later symposium article "Humanism: An Essay at Definition."[16] The earlier work is largely a tract on education; yet, realizing that education must be based upon a sound philosophy of life, Babbitt felt compelled to enunciate first his humanistic conception of what the finished product of education should be. His discrimination between the humanists and the humanitarians of either the utilitarian or the sentimental brand sets him off, even at this early period, from the pragmatic (which, we have noted, is now calling itself humanistic) and the romantic schools. In all his writings he laments the confusion consequent upon the use of the term Humanism for a humanitarianism which is not concerned "like the humanist, with the individual and his inner life, but with the welfare and progress of mankind in the lump."[17]

Professor Babbitt defines his Humanism as measure in everything, as order, as restraint. He does not entirely repudiate naturalism for he believes that to do so would be an impossible reaction. The humanist's aim is not to deny his age but to complete it.[18] Yet, he maintains that a man "must first show that he can act upon himself, there will be time enough for him to act on other men and on the world."[19]

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[14] *Cf.* Introduction to Taine: *L'Introduction a L'histoire literature anglaise,* edited by Babbitt (New York, Heath, 1889).

[15] I. Babbitt, *Literature and the American College* (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1908).

[16] In *Humanism and America,* edited by Norman Foerster (New York, Farrar and Rinehart, 1930).

[17] I. Babbitt, *"Democracy and Leadership* (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1924).

[18] *Literature and the American College,* 258.

[19] *Ibid.,* 70.

In *The Masters of Modern French Criticism*[20] Babbitt stresses the need which the individualist has of standards to supplant the traditional unifications Christianity imposed upon him. The problem of the One and the Many so confused eminent French critics that they failed to work out any adequate standards in letters because they held only relative standards of life. In his *New Laokoon*[21] Babbitt had endeavored to dispel the romantic confusion of the arts just as Lessing had attacked the neo-classic confusion of his time. In *Rousseau and Romanticism,*[22] he traces the havoc wrought by romantic naturalism and lays the initial blame on Rousseau's dictum of the natural goodness of man and on the false dualism which he created between the individual and society. In *Democracy and Leadership*[23] Babbitt turns his searchlight on the types of political theory and admonishes us that democracy will work for the good of a people only when competent leaders can steer the course with a thorough understanding of the standards befitting man as man and with the will to see these operative in all.

In addition to his literary writings Babbitt's work in the classroom was not without influence upon the future generation of critics who were imbibing his erudition and learning how to apply his value yardstick to literature and life. From 1894 until his recent and untimely death in July, 1933, Babbitt taught at his Alma Mater, Harvard. In 1912 he was elevated to the chair of French Literature which by method and content he made a chair of comparative literature. His graduate studies abroad, especially under the noted Orientalist, Sylvain Levi, at the *École des Hautes Études* in Paris, gave him a mastery of ancient languages to add to his ready ease and extensive reading in modern languages. At the same time he acquired a first hand acquaintance with the

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[20] I. Babbitt, *The Masters of Modern French Criticism* (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1912).

[21] I. Babbitt, *The New Laokoon* (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1910, seventh impression, 1926).

[22] I. Babbitt, *Rousseau and Romanticism* (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1919).

[23] I. Babbitt, *Democracy and Leadership* (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1924).

sources of Oriental thought—a factor so recurrent in his humanistic evaluations.

Associated with Babbitt even in these Sanskrit days was his colleague, Paul Elmer More. It was to Babbitt that he dedicated his *Century of Indian Epigrams* reflecting the religious thought of India and confirming his own conception of the dualism of man's nature—a dualism that was being denied by modern thought and letters. After a brief period of college teaching More retired to Shelburne, N. H., to devote his days to reading and reflection; and it is from this haven that his *Shelburne Essays*[24] came forth to set a salutary standard of American literary criticism. Like Babbitt, Paul Elmer More was convinced that sound standards could be erected only on the basis of a sound philosophy of life, and, with Babbitt, he believed that the world had gone wrong on first principles and that to set it aright a reëxamination of fundamentals was necessary. This process with its ramifications, More has detailed in his series of *The Greek Tradition,*[25] ending with his acceptance of Christianity as the sublimation of Greek philosophy and the necessary basis of a complete enlightened Humanism.

Associated with Babbitt and More and with them the object of Mr. Mencken's flaying invectives, was the late W. C. Brownell. These three leaders were signalled out by Louis J. A. Mercier in his work *Le Movement Humaniste aux États-Unis.* Another early colleague was Stuart Sherman. The movement gained momentum with each new attack of critics like Mencken, so that in 1930 Norman Foerster edited a volume[26] of contributed essays by fourteen humanists, or near-humanists, Louis T. More, Irving Babbitt, Paul E. More, G. R. Elliott, E. S. Eliot, Frank J. Mather, Jr., Alan R. Thompson, Robert Schafer, Harry H. Clark, Stanley P. Chase, Gorman B. Munson, Bernard Bandler II, Sherlock B. Gass and Richard L. Brown.

Favorable and unfavorable criticism of this work mingled freely

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[24] P. E. More, *Shelburne Essays Series,* I-XI (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1904-1921).

[25] P. E. More, *The Greek Tradition,* 4 vols. (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1921-19).

[26] N. Foerster, (Ed.), *Humanism and America.*

and plentifully in all the leading periodicals of this country and in not a few abroad. The opposition led by Grattan soon published a *Critique of Humanism*[27] taking an anti-humanistic stand. The contributors to this symposium were not of the radical type; they were, rather, those who thought that they were guided by a humane tradition, yet they could not subscribe wholeheartedly to a doctrine that seemed to them over-puritanical. More and more comment continued to flood the press until the popular journals, wearied with the debate, sought newer interests. The principals continued on their work in the quieter forum of classroom and criticism. Babbitt's last work was *On Being Creative,*[28] a collection of critical essays. More finished his series with his volume on *The Catholic Faith.*[29] Norman Foerster and Gorman Munson restated their doctrines in their respective volumes, *Towards Standards*[30] and *The Dilemma of the Liberated.*[31]

We have given just the barest outline of this attempt to formulate a philosophy for modern man, suitable to his natural dignity yet acceptable to his modern bent. To what extent does this philosophy agree and disagree with older traditions and with contemporary trends? Our following chapters will attempt to answer this question. Let us note here, however, that following Babbitt and More the other humanists of this group all attend to one or another phase of the cleavage between man's way and nature's way—a dualism on which they place much emphasis, as we shall see later. This dualism may be between man and external nature, or between the "natural man" and the "spiritual man." It may emphasize the "inner check" in any of its various modes, or as against the naturalistic "education of the senses," it may commend man to the study of his own humane traditions. In any case, humanistic dualism places man's hope not upon what nature,

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[27] C. H. Grattan, *The Critique of Humanism* (New York, Brewer and Warren, 1930).

[28] I. Babbitt, *On Being Creative* (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1932).

[29] P. E. More, *The Catholic Faith* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1931).

[30] N. Foerster, *Towards Standards* (New York. Farrar and Rinehart, 1930).

[31] G. B. Munson, *The Dilemma of the Liberated* (New York, Coward, McCann, 1930).

whether within or without, may do for him, but upon his making himself more completely human. At this point a number of questions confront us. Why must man be isolated from the rest of nature? Why is there a "law for man and a law for thing?" Why should individual man be considered apart from mankind in the lump? What is there in human nature that renders it unique? What is man? These are questions that humanists should answer if they are true to their name. The very subject-matter of their theorizing should not go unexplained. No humanist of the present day has written a special treatise on Man. It is the purpose of this study to discover in the works of the humanists some of the material that might be included in such a treatise, or treatises, and to compare these findings with the Scholastic doctrine on man. We have divided the humanists into two major camps, the Dewey-Potter-Reese contingent and the Babbitt-More corps. We believe that the recent 1933 Humanist Manifesto has justified our division and that our following chapters will confirm it.

CHAPTER II

Man in the "Religious Humanism"

One of the common definitions of Humanism accepted by those of a pragmatic bent is that Humanism is a system of thought which definitely explains truth with reference to man's concern in it. The so-called Humanism of a writer like F. C. S. Schiller has in it some of the intellectual impressionism of a Protagoras. Like the ancient sophists, the pragmatists would forego the discipline of a central standard, and make of the individual man and his thoughts and feelings, the measure of all things. Schiller himself defines his Humanism as "unavoidable and salutary anthropomorphism."[1] And again as "a reform of logic which removes the unwarranted *tabu* put on the personal side of knowing."[2] Our inquiry here is not concerned with Mr. Schiller's logic but with his concept of man who is the person knowing, and whom he would make the measure of all things.

Schiller regards man as one of the rest of nature, as totally a product of evolution, though the highest product thus far. He believes that man can make his own truth and can make himself what he will. He believes that the end of man cannot be formulated with finality because his evolution should be constantly progressive. The end of each individual man, like that of the State, is to help further this progress. He chides man for having neglected to do his part in pushing evolution to a higher level:

> Man has ceased to be a progressive species long ago. The evolutionary impetus which carried our ancestors from the level of the ape and even of the lemur, through such subhuman types as Pithecanthropus, and the Heidelberg and Neandartal men, to "modern" man, seems to have spent itself by the middle of the paleolithic period, *i. e.,* say, thirty thousand years ago.[3]

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[1] F. C. S. Schiller, *Riddles of the Sphinx* (New York, Macmillan, rev. ed., 1910), 145.

[2] F. C. S. Schiller, "Why Humanism" in *Contemporary British Philosophers,* ed. by Muirhead (New York, Macmillan, 19), Vol. I, 408.

[3] F. C. S. Schiller, *Tantulus, or The Future of Man* (London, Kegan Paul, 1924), 20.

Schiller does not believe that evolution should stop here yet he contends that the human race has no hope of rising above its present miserable state unless it definitely and deliberately wills and sets out to accomplish a higher type of humanity. It appears, he says, that we can extract no guarantee of progress either from the nature of Man or from the nature of human institutions. Man has been indolent:

> Alike in mentality and moral, modern man is still substantially identical with his paleolithic ancestors. He is still the irrational, impulsive, emotional foolish, destructive, cruel, credulous, creature he always was.[4]

> It is our whole nature that is at fault. We are suffering from what used to be called original sin, but what in the light of modern science is seen to consist chiefly of weakness acquired in the course of biological history by inattention to its trends and by lack of effort to correct them. Man must, therefore, remold himself into an altogether superior creature, if he is to attain his heart's desire, or even if he is not to degenerate and perish.[5]

The chief way in which man can ward off social decay and set evolution again on foot is, according to Schiller, by eugenic reform. By scientific eugenics, he believes, man can better his race and give an impetus to ever higher development.

> If scientific eugenics can put a stop to the contra-selection, Man will recover the plasticity and the progressiveness he once possessed, and will be able to evolve further—in whatever direction seems to him best. We need not take alarm at this possibility, for with his superior knowledge he may surely be trusted to make a better job of his evolution than the Lemur and the Pithecanthropus, who were our progenitors and managed to evolve into modern man.[6]

> It is safe to predict that sooner rather than later an enlightened public opinion, thus converted to eugenics, would compel every

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[4] *Ibid.*, 37.

[5] F. C. S. Schiller, *Social Decay and Eugenic Reform* (New York, Long and Smith, 1932), vi.

[6] *Tantulus, or The Future of Man*, 66.

> State to take over the private enterprise of improving the race and to extend and enforce it by legal sanctions. And then biological evolution might get under way again, and man might grow into a being as far superior to his present type as he is now to the gorilla and the chimpanzee.[7]

> It must not be pronounced impossible. For to do so would not only be to renounce the ambition of rising above our present nature, but to confess our intrinsic inferiority to the Miocene apes who overcame the most terrific obstacles in order to turn themselves into men.[8]

If Schiller's humanistic logic led him to such dogmatic optimism it is not hard to see why some of the American humanists whose doctrines we are about to examine acknowledge an indebtedness to him; we cite his tenets only for this reason. Schiller did not confine his humanism to the discovery of truth and logical method, nor did his namesakes in America. We turn now to examine their doctrines:

> Humanism is not merely a method of solving the problem of knowing, but an attitude towards the problem of making life rich and full and glorious. It finds its test of worth in human well-being. Its basic method of personal and social progress is intelligent co-operation with and control of life processes. . . . The fundamentals of humanism are: (1) the authority of evidence, (2) the supremacy of intelligence, (3) the validity of freedom, (4) the leadership of the competent and (5) the commonwealth of man.[9]

Starting with such general assumptions, Curtis Reese sets out with "experimental experience" as his test of truth, to preach a Humanism that aims at the conscious experience of the fullness of life—the complete and permanent satisfaction of human living.

On May 1, 1933, the Associated Press carried a summary of a Humanist Manifesto signed by "eleven eminent professors of philosophy, theology, economics, medicine and sociology, and twenty-three other leaders in editorial, literary, educational, and religious

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[7] *Social Decay and Eugenic Reform,* 47.
[8] *Ibid.,* 70.
[9] C. Reese, *Humanism* (Chicago, Open Court, 1926).

fields." This Manifesto, as we mentioned in the preceding chapter, marked the coalition of several hitherto independent movements of Humanism. We shall now quote the text of this manifesto and then seek further confirmation and elaboration of the concept of man contained therein in the writings of some of the signers. Our present emphasis is not upon any one man's special explanations but upon those common to the group. We omit the preamble of the text: [10]

> *First:* Religious Humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created.
>
> *Second:* Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as the result of a continuous process.
>
> *Third:* Holding an organic view of life, humanists find that the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected.
>
> *Fourth:* Humanism recognizes that man's religious culture and civilization, as clearly depicted by anthropology and history, are the product of a gradual development due to his interaction with his natural environment and with his social heritage. The individual born into a particular culture is largely moulded by that culture.
>
> *Fifth:* Humanism asserts that the nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantees of human values. Obviously humanism does not deny the possibility of realities as yet undiscovered, but it does insist that the way to determine the existence of any and all realities is by means of intelligent inquiry and by the assessment of their relation to human needs. Religion must formulate its hopes and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method.
>
> *Sixth:* We are convinced that the time has passed for theism, deism, modernism and the several varieties of "new thought."
>
> *Seventh:* Religion consists of those actions, purposes and experiences which are humanly significant. Nothing human is alien to the religious. It includes labor, art, science, philosophy, love, friendship, recreation—all that is in its degree expressive of intelligently satisfying human living. The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained.
>
> *Eighth:* Religious humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now. This is the explanation of the humanist's social passion.

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[10] C. F. Potter, *Humanizing Religion* (New York, Harper, 1933), 8.

Ninth: In place of the old attitudes involved in worship and prayer the humanist finds his religious emotions expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and in a co-operative effort to promote social well-being.

Tenth: It follows that there will be no uniquely religious emotions and attitudes of the kind hitherto associated with belief in the supernatural.

Eleventh: Man will learn to face the crises of life in terms of his naturalness and probability. Reasonable and manly attitudes will be fostered by education and supported by custom. We assume that humanism will take the path of social and mental hygiene and discourage sentimental and unreal hopes and wishful thinking.

Twelfth: Believing that religion must work increasingly for joy in living, religious humanists aim to foster the creative in man and to encourage achievements that add to the satisfactions of life.

Thirteenth: Religious humanism maintains that all associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life. The intelligent evaluation, transformation, control and direction of such associations and institutions with a view to the enhancement of human life is the purpose and program of humanism. Certainly religious institutions, their ritualistic forms, ecclesiastical methods, and communal activities must be reconstituted as rapidly as experience allows, in order to function effectively in the modern world.

Fourteenth: The humanists are firmly convinced that the existing acquisitive and profit-motivated society has shown itself to be inadequate and that a radical change in methods, controls and motives must be instituted. A socialized and co-operative economic order must be established to the end that the equitable distribution of the means of life be possible. The goal of humanism is a free and universal society in which people voluntarily and intelligibly co-operate for the common good. Humanists demand a shared life in a shared world.

Fifteenth and last: We assert that humanism will: (*a*) affirm life rather than deny it; *(b)* seek to elicit the possibilities of life, not to flee from it, and (*c*) endeavor to establish the conditions of a satisfactory life for all, not merely for the few. By this positive morale and intention humanism will be guided, and from this perspective and alignment the techniques and efforts of humanism will flow.

So stand the theses of religious humanism. Though we consider the religious forms and ideas of our fathers no longer adequate, the quest for the good life is still the central task for mankind. Man is at last becoming aware that he alone is responsible for the realization of the world of his dreams, and that he has within himself the power for its achievement. He must set intelligence and will to the task.

We may thus summarize and synthesize the religious humanist's concept of man as contained in the foregoing: Man is a part of nature and has emerged as a result of a continuous process. There is in him no dualism of mind and body. He has no supernatural or cosmic guarantee of his human value, for there is no personal God and the cosmos is indifferent to its emergents. The complete realization of human personality, the end of man's life, can be attained in the here and now. His religion excludes the old attitudes involved in worship and prayer; his religious emotion is expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and a co-operative effort to promote social well being. He alone is responsible for the realization of his world of dreams, and he has within him the power of its achievement.

We propose to treat these humanists as a group since they themselves have united to set forth what we presume each writer regarded as an adequate manifesto; hence we shall not give any one man's works exhaustive treatment, but shall only look of confirmation or elaboration of the collective statement in the writings of some of leading adherents of the movement.

Man is a part of nature and has emerged as a result of a continuous process: Man, then, is not essentially different from the rest of nature but is one with it; the whole of his being has evolved from lower forms in a self-existing and uncreated universe, which nevertheless exhibits creative processes.

Let us see how some of these humanists have developed this theme:

> Man is a part of a larger whole. There is outside of him that, the nature of which we do not fully understand, but which beyond doubt affects his life. The problem for the future is to discover to what degree man's life is self-determined and to what extent it is not. Humanism contends that our power of self-determination is far greater than we have thus far supposed. It would make man the true center of his universe and the captain of his soul.[11]

> We see man as the highest product of the creative process, we

[11] J. A. F. Auer, *Humanism States Its Case* (Boston, The Beacon Press, 1933), 25.

> know nothing above or beyond him, the highest things of which we can dream are but the products of our own mind, and so the the supreme object of our allegiance is human life.[12]

> I recognize man for what he really is, namely a highly developed, social animal, the product of evolution, but an animal, who by reason of the development of his power to think and to feel and by reason of the development of his culture and civilization, is now far removed from even the highest of the lower animals.[13]

> If we have high hopes in man, it should be emphasized; it is not that we have any certainty as to his place in the scheme of things, or his destiny in the evolutionary process.[14]

> We are experiments of cosmic forces, points where the universe, as it were, mysteriously has come to rest for an instant.[15]

These attempts, and we could cite many others, to determine man's place in the universe are fair samples of this humanistic method. It does not explain *how* or *why* man reaches his present stage; these explanations are left to science. Towards the *whither,* its attitude is professedly "expectant" and "wistful."

But what have they to say of man as man; what is the constitution of his human nature? Here Curtis Reese becomes the spokesman:

> Original human nature is a bundle of unorganized impulses . . . Human nature has become what it is by a gradual process of organization around the will to responsible living.[16]

> The humanizing of human nature consists in the gradual organization of instincts or impulses or original tendencies in harmony with the growing conception of individual and social worth, *i. e.,* in harmony with community of interests.[17]

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[12] J. H. Dietrich, "Unitarianism and Humanism" in *Humanist Sermons,* ed. by C. Reese (Chicago, Open Court, 1927), 104.

[13] J. Walker, *Humanism as a Way of Life* (New York, Macmillan, 1932), 66.

[14] E. M. Cosgrove, "The Architecture of Humanism" in *Humanist Sermons.*

[15] E. F. Cook, "The Universe of Humanism" in *Humanist Sermons.*

[16] C. Reese, *Humanism* (Chicago, Open Court, 1926), 48.

[17] *Ibid.,* 49.

> Original human nature is neither depraved nor divine: it is simply unorganized. Its remaking, its regeneration, if you prefer, consists in organization and direction towards worthy ends. And this is the work of intelligence and will.[18]

Similarly John Dewey finds man "chiefly a creature of habit and emotion."[19] Perhaps we can come upon a better understanding of their concept of man by pursuing their meaning of habit, emotion, intelligence and will.

> The essence of habit is an acquired predisposition to *ways* or modes of response, not to particular acts except as, under special conditions, these express a way of behaving. Habit means special sensitiveness or accessibility to certain classes of stimuli, standing predilections and aversions, rather than bare recurrence of specific acts. It means will.[20]

Here in one quotation we have found two definitions for which we were seeking: for, in the last sentence, Dewey has made habit and will synonymous. Moreover,

> Concrete habits do all the perceiving, recognizing, imagining, recalling, judging, conceiving and reasoning that is done. "Consciousness," whether as a stream or as special sensations and images, expresses functions of habits, phenomena of their formation, operation, their interruptions and reorganization.[21]

Intelligence, according to Dewey, is kindled when there is a conflict of habits and a release of impulse. A novel factor in the environment gives rise to some impulse which runs counter to the body of organized activities and which tends to initiate a different and incompatible activity. With this shifting in activity conscious thought and feeling arise and are accentuated, conscious search is inaugurated.[22] "Intelligence is discrimination, distinc-

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[18] *Ibid.,* 52.

[19] John Dewey, "What I Believe" in *Forum,* March, 1930.

[20] J. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* (New York, Henry Holt, 1922), 42.

[21] *Ibid.,* 177.

[22] *Ibid.,* 179.

tion . . . we have to *act* in order to keep secure amid the moving flux of circumstance . . . and in order to act successfully we have must act after conscious selection—after discrimination of means and ends."[23] Yet Dewey leaves unexplained the source of intelligence and its peculiar discriminating powers. Human living is for him social living and this demands coöperation, still reason plays a minor part:

> Man continues to live because he is a living creature not because reason convinces him of the certainty of future satisfactions and achievements. He is instinct with activities that carry him on. Individuals here and there cave in, and most individuals sag, withdraw and seek refuge at this and that point. But man as man still has the dumb pluck of the animal. He has endurance, hope, curiosity, eagerness, love of action. These traits belong to him by structure, not by taking thought. Memory of past and foresight of future convert dumbness into some degree of articulateness. They illumine curiosity and steady courage. Then when the future arrives with its inevitable disappointments as well as fulfilments, and with new sources of trouble, failure loses something of its fatality, and suffering yields fruit of instruction not of bitterness. Humility is more demanded at our moments of triumph than at those of failure. For humility is not a caddish self-depreciation. It is the sense of our slight inability even with our best intelligence and efforts to command events; a sense of our dependence upon forces that go their way without our wish and plan. In morals the infinitive and the imperative develop from the participle, present tense. Perfection means perfecting, fulfilment, fulfiling, and the good is now or never.[24]

This is the most complete and the most compact picture of human life that Dewey gives. Reese adds his touch to the portrait by saying that humanism regards all the normal human impulses as valid and worthful and it seeks the complete and harmonious realization of them all. There is no question of higher or lower impulses. None is mean or unclean. All are good and sacred. Humanism proclaims the democracy of the human impulses. Conflicts in the impulsive life are abnormalities due to the misunderstanding and misuse of impulses. "The well-

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[23] *The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy* (New York, Henry Holt, 1910) 42.

[24] *Human Nature and Conduct,* 289.

balanced, fully developed, and intelligently controlled impulsive life is the full life. Of all the needs of the race, the greatest are for freedom from repression and oppression, and for committal to the fullest possible realization of life on the highest possible human plane."[25]

Not only are impulses all equally good, but there is a like democracy of all life processes:

> Life is a complex of personal and other than personal processes, which so interpenetrate that neither can be regarded as "higher" than the other. Hence, "personality" cannot be segregated and held to be more worthful than the "impersonal processes."[26]

Yet Dr. Potter tells us that "Men are not men as yet. They are still too much animal. That which distinguishes man from animal is personality. And the essential element of personality is self recognition."[27] Elsewhere Dr. Potter states that "The three main elements of human personality are self-recognition, self-direction, and self-giving. These are the things that distinguish us from the so-called beasts, from lower types, lower personalities, the animals."[28]

There is in man no dualism of mind and body. This tenet has been partly enunciated above and it is not hard to find further testimonies to it. Edward S. Ames writes,

> The religious humanists do not accept any dualism in man or in nature. They are naturalistic, experimental, behavioristic, humanitarian. They accept the evolutionary doctrine that man comes of animal lineage and makes his way in the world by trial-and-error method of acquiring experience and adjusting himself to the conditions of life. Man's difference from the lower animals does not lie in any supernatural endowment, but in the superior equipment which has come to him through the cumulative processes of evolution. Yet that difference is very real. Animals have rudimentary cries and calls, but man has articulate speech, written words, and a vast literature. Animals have no tools, no art, no science, no history, no religion.[29]

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[25] C. Reese, *Humanism,* 25.
[26] *Ibid.,* 2.
[27] C. F. Potter, *Humanizing Religion.* (New York, Harpers. 1933) 198.
[28] *Ibid.,* 147.
[29] E. S. Ames, *Humanism* (Chicago, Chicago Literary Club, 1931), 9.

Through his inventive and comprehending intelligence man becomes aware of his superiority over nature's other animals. He finds himself truly the lord of creation

> . . . not by means of an instantaneous creative fiat from above, but by winning his place through struggle and skill developed in the long process of gathering wisdom through experience. His greatness is no longer due to the presence in him of a blurred image of a perfect Creator, but is the achieved result of his natural inheritance, and his growth through active effort and self-education. His imperfections are not now believed to be the effect of an ancestral fall through sin, but the limitations and weaknesses of a being coming into life through an animal lineage and finding his way through trial and error into some measure of success and understanding.[30]

Man has no supernatural or cosmic guarantees of his human values. Here the pragmatism of Humanism asserts itself. Things are worthful in proportion to their capacity to conduce to human well-being. A thing has value if it works here and now. Man does not look forward to some far off divine event whether this be conceived as a beatific vision or some cosmic regeneration. Man himself is the foundation of all human inquires, no matter how far they are extended.

> If it is possible to reason from man up to God, Humanism desires nothing better than to do so, but it must be allowed to use its own method, or else it cannot go on.[31]

> God may exist, but nevertheless man and his moral struggle depends upon his own understanding of what is right and wrong. A divine revelation is no help, we must verify such a revelation in our own experience, after all. In the end, our own concepts of right and wrong decide. Why seek to borrow what cannot be borrowed, and which, though it could be borrowed, would not truly be our own. Let us trust man's sincerity in trying to impress his own moral status. Morals are simply ways of behavior by which we try to render living easier. They help us to do away with friction and to create harmony. This is in the interest of all, as our common sense will tell us. An appeal to an outward agency is not needed, our self interest will assert itself.[32]

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[30] *Ibid.,* 19.
[31] J. A. F. Auer, *Humanism States Its Case,* 146.
[32] *Ibid.,* 77.

Morality is social. For practical purposes, Dewey says, morals mean customs, folkways, established collective habits. "Morality is an endeavor to find for the manifestation of impulse in special situations an office of refreshment and renewal."[33] Moral codes should be based upon the intelligent acknowledgment of the continuity of nature, man and society.

Dr. John Dietrich, in his foreword to Walker's book,[34] has great confidence in man's powers. He describes the kernel of the humanistic outlook:

> The direction of the cosmic process known as evolution, especially as manifested in the life of man on this planet, has come more or less under the control of its latest product, consciousness as embodied in man. That which has thus far pushed forward unconsciously can now be intelligently directed by man, and it lies within his power to develop human life to the utmost limits of its capacity by the application of intelligent human effort in cooperation with natural processes. Thus man becomes the creator and master of his own destiny—a thought which involves wonderful opportunities and tremendous responsibilities. Humanism seeks to impress him with the necessity of the grasping of these opportunities and assuming the responsibilities. The gods have had their day, let man now take over the job.

This sense of the self-sufficiency of man pervades the writings of these humanists in startling contrast to the insignificance and precariousness they admit of the whole human race. On the cosmic scale man is dwarfed by time and space. The immense universe in which he appears for such a brief moment cannot regard him with primary concern:

> Within the limited stage upon which he appears, man's existence may seem of primary importance to himself, and he may bravely struggle to make the best of it, but his enthusiasms are scarcely to be taken on a cosmic scale or in terms of the hopes deeply cherished by generations of men in the pre-scientific ages of faith.[35]

The acids of modernity have destroyed the old religious beliefs

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[33] J. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct,* 169.
[34] J. H. Walker, *Humanism as a Way of Life,* viii.
[35] E. S. Ames, *Op. cit.,* 12.

that gave nothing to life by the origin and destiny they assigned to man. "Faith in the divine author and authority in which Western civilization confided, inherited ideas of the soul and its destiny, of fixed revelation, of completely stable institutions, of automatic progress, have been made impossible for the cultivated mind of the Western world."[36] All social and moral existence like physical existences are in a state of continuous change, consequently human values are to be gauged by human needs here and now. Experimental experience rejects religious beliefs that are "saturated with the supernatural" because the "supernatural signifies precisely that which lies beyond experience."[37]

The complete realization of human personality, the end of man's life, can be obtained in the here and now: The chief end of man is to build a "towering personality" and to direct it into ways of complete living.[38] The very basic foundation of Humanism is the insistence that "man is an end and not a means towards something else, not a mere instrument to some other end unrelated to himself."[39] Though man is a physical, emotional, intellectual, social and moral being, he is not to be treated as a means to cosmic ends, to the glory of God, to the world order, to moral order or to any other man. He is his own end: his worth is inherent and not derived from any super world of any sort.[40]

> The old religions make the glory of God the chief end of man, and all effort is directed to his glorification, because man is only a means toward the fulfillment of God's purpose. But we believe that the chief end of man is to serve man, that man is in himself an end, and that the chief purpose in life is to create and preserve those things which give an ever-deepening value to human life.[41]

Man is to use intelligence and will to achieve his end. The basis of his moral life is freedom and its cornerstone, knowledge; but, the humanist adds, knowledge at best is only approximate and

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[36] J. Dewey, "What I Believe."

[37] *Ibid.*

[38] C. Reese, *Humanism,* 17.

[39] J. Dietrich, *The Humanist Pulpit* (Minneapolis, First Unitarian Society, 1931), Vol. IV, 153.

[40] C. Reese, *Humanist Sermons,* viii-x, *passim.*

[41] J. Dietrich, "Unitarianism and Humanism" in *Humanist Sermons,* 104.

tentative. We cannot always know exactly what is right and wrong. "So-called 'principles' change with changing time—to say nothing of policies. Ethics like life is in a state of flux. In moral life we strike rock bottom only when a free man intentionally acts in harmony with his own intelligent conviction."[42] It is necessary to pause here to inquire the meaning of freedom. The humanist replies that the elements of freedom are (i) efficiency in action, ability to carry out plans, the absence of thwarting obstacles; (ii) the capacity to vary plans, to change the course of action, to experience novelties; (iii) the power of desire and choice as factors in events.[43] The function of the will, Reese contends, has not been sufficiently recognized, nor has the will been developed adequately:

> Religion has called upon men unconditionally to surrender the will to outside and supernatural forces. "Breaking the stubborn will" is evangelical language. Worldly powers have coerced the will of subjects, parents have broken the will of children. The will is the central agent in remaking and should be neither broken nor surrendered to God or man.[44]

The individual's intelligent use of freedom in coöperation with other free agents will make for social progress, hence *man alone is responsible for the realization of his world of dreams, and he has within him the power of its achievement.*

Man's religion excludes the old attitudes involved in worship and prayer; his religious emotion is expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and a coöperative effort to promote a social well-being. This follows from the foregoing. When the humanist lost belief in a personal God he could dispense with adoration and devotion quite logically. Yet he resents being called an atheist; he may or may not retain the term God and give it his own definition. God may be conceived as man's own Better Self, as a vast cosmic drift or trend towards harmony, fellowship, and mutual aid; but nothing that is not empirically certain may enter into the conception of the God of human experience.

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[42] C. Reese, *Humanism,* 39.
[43] J. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct,* 303.
[44] C. Reese, *Humanism,* 53.

> A humanist is not one who necessarily denies the existence of God: he may deny it, he may doubt it, or he may accept it. He may admit that a belief in God, could it be maintained, would greatly enrich our religious experience or he might agree with the statement made by Professor J. S. Huxley "the sense of spiritual relief which comes from rejecting the idea of God as a supernatural being is enormous." Humanists differ widely on that point, but all insist that a true religious experience without a belief in God in the theistic sense is possible.[45]

Some have claimed that in rejecting God the Humanists have turned to worship Humanity or Man. The humanists resent this charge; they claim to have thrown over board all attitudes of worship and prayer. There is no being higher than man, and men are equally worthful; no one can demand servile homage. Man must answer his own prayers, if they are to be answered at all. In *The Thinker* for June 1930, John Dewey writes,

> The new religious movement that calls itself Humanism does not propose to worship humanity, much less set up a system of rites which are to do for this worship what the sacraments did for medieval Christianity. It finds its conceptions of God and of other religious ideas of the past in the realm of human ideals and aspirations, and would yoke the religious emotions of mankind to the promotion of the ideal phases of human life. . . . What Humanism means to me is an expansion, not a contraction, of human life, an expansion in which nature and the science of nature are made the willing servants of human good.

This expansion, the discovery and illumination of the ideals within the natural life of man, will engender religious emotion, an intensity of religious interest in all human problems, and man will find an outlet for his emotion in his coöperative effort for social well-being.

Such is the humanism of the "religious" group. We may add here a word on the humanism of those who have not allied themselves formally with this creed but who nevertheless subscribe largely to its articles. The one book that brought the greatest amount of popular attention to the Humanism of our day, was Walter Lippmann's *Preface to Morals*. Let us hear a last word from him:

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[45] J. A. F. Auer, *Humanism States Its Case*, 79.

> The reality of human nature is bound to elude us if we look only at a momentary cross section of it. To understand it, therefore, for the purposes of moralizing, we have to revise our intellectual apparatus, and learn to look upon each moment of behavior not as the manifestation of certain fixed elements in human nature, but as a stage in the evolution of human nature. We grow up, we mature, and decline; being endowed with memory and the capacity to form habits, our conduct is cumulative. We drag our past along with us and it pushes us on. We do not make a new approach to each new experience. We approach new experiences with the expectations and habits developed by previous experience, and under the impact of novelty these expectations and habits become modified.[46]
>
> The problems of education are to lead the child from one stage of development to another until he at last becomes a harmonious and autonomous personality; the functional disorders of character are problems in the fixations and repressions on the path to maturity; the art of living is to pass gracefully from youth to old age, and at last, as Montaigne said, to learn to die.
>
> It is this progress that we have to understand and imaginatively to conceive. For in conceiving it we conceive the matrix of humanism. In this conception is to be found, I believe, the substitute for that conception of divine government which gives shape and form to the theocratic culture. To replace the conception of man as the subject of a heavenly king, which dominates the whole ancestral order of life, humanism takes as its dominant pattern the progress of the individual from helpless infancy to self-governing maturity.[47]
>
> The mature character may be attained by growth and experience and insight, or by ascetic discipline, or by that process of being reborn which is called conversion; when it is attained, the moral problem of whether to yield to impulse or to check it, or how much to check it and how much to yield, has disappeared.[48]

The function of Mr. Lippmann's "high religion" is to reveal to men the quality of mature experience; its core is disinterestedness; it is a prophecy of what life is like when desire is in perfect harmony with reality. Whether or not any one can become perfectly "mature" in this sense, Mr. Lippmann does not say.

In any attempt to evaluate the humanism we have been examining thus far, we are struck at once with the uncertainty and yet the optimism that pervades the humanistic air. The philosophy

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[46] W. Lippmann, *Preface to Morals* (New York, MacMillan, 1929), 171.
[47] *Ibid.*, 175.
[48] *Ibid.*, 192.

underlying it is mechanistic naturalism. The fact that it accepts unquestionably from the sciences a self-existing and uncreated universe which is supposed in time to have produced man, makes it untrue to its avowed principle of accepting truth only upon experience. If the world itself is just an accident of chance and from its elements organisms have emerged as a result of no purposive plan of no intelligent Designer but by some happy and mysterious combination of these elements in an unforeseen pattern, man is hardly worthful for all he may boast of his personality. If human life is just a fortuitous by-product of a careless universe, a trivial incident in cosmic evolution how can man make more than a gesture at greatness, or why should he make a gesture at all? If the cosmos is indifferent and there is no discerning power above it, of what avail is human excellence? Unless there is in man something more than material elements and forces, something that will endure and outlive this world, man should be depressed rather than optimistic.

The humanist rejects the supernatural, yet when we try to pin him down to a definition of the supernatural we find he uses the term to describe "something that seems to him not quite so credible as the things he calls natural."[49] His pragmatism denies the greatest of human needs. Chesterton has very aptly remarked "I agree with the pragmatists that apparent objective truth is not the whole matter; that there is an authoritative need to believe the things that are necessary to the human mind. But I say that one of those necessities precisely is a belief in objective truth. Pragmatism is a matter of human needs and one of the first of human needs is to be something more than a pragmatist."[50] But on its own premises, will humanism work? It has given man a freedom which cuts him off from his spiritual securities and left his soul to starve.

We intend to give in a final chapter the concept of man that Scholasticism, old and new, opposes to this monistic figure; however we believe that the intervening chapters will show that man is more than the naturalists would have us believe. A word of from a non-scholastic will suffice here:

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[49] W. Lippmann, *A Preface to Morals,* 23.

[50] G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy* (New York, John Lane, 1919), 64.

> The emergence of personality, he [the humanist] thinks, is a fortuitous incident on a midget planet, lost in the immensities of stellar space, and Christian faith in the primacy of personality involves an utter and even humorous lack of perspective.
>
> The Christian, on the other hand, may well discover the humor of the situation in the humanist rather than in himself. For a tiny microcosm to face this vast macrocosm with a gesture of nonchalance is, after all, sheer posing. It is striking an attitude which becomes more incongruous the longer one watches it. If ever a religious movement whistled to keep its courage up—and many of them have—humanism does it when it proposes as a basic credo that the universe is neither intelligent, purposive, nor friendly, that it made us by accident and will annihilate us by necessity, but that, after all, this does not matter, that we should be disinterested about it and indifferent to it, and should proceed with eager devotion to construct a high religion.[51]

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[51] H. E. Fosdick, "Religion without God. The Limitations of Humanism," in *Harpers,* December 1929.

CHAPTER III

The Humanism of Irving Babbitt

Ferdinand C. S. Schiller, in his article "Humanism: Philosophical Aspects" in the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences,* writes thus of the Humanism we are about to consider:

> Finally there is in America a movement under the leadership of Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More which also marches under the banner of Humanism. It represents a protest against unbridled vocationalism in education and advocates a return to the old liberal education in classical literature. It stands for traditionalism in literary criticism and emphasizes the necessity of order in social relations, being in these respects related to the type of thought represented in an earlier generation by Brunetière and more recently by Julian Benda. While this movement has no connection with the philosophic uses of the term it is frequently confused with some or all of them.

Edward Scribner Ames of the "religious Humanism" group thus distinguished his from Babbitt's Humanism:

> This kind of humanism [Babbitt's] because of its literary ancestry and its present-day literary representatives, may be called "literary humanism." . . . "Religious humanism" is of a very different character from literary humanism . . . In fact, strange as it may seem, the two types of humanism are flatly opposed to each other in regard to all fundamental principles except one. The one thing in which they agree is in their interest in man.

We have quoted these two passages that the reader may be reminded that in the discussion which is to follow we shall be dealing with a philosophy which neither allies itself to, nor is claimed by the humanists considered in the last chapter. Let us now examine the method and content of Babbitt's teaching.

Babbitt is fond of distinguishing three levels on which man may experience life—the naturalistic, the humanistic, and the religious. He says, "Three such planes may be distinguished—

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[1] E. S. Ames, *Humanism* (Chicago, Chicago Literary Club, 1931), 9.

the religious, the humanistic, the naturalistic—though there are, of course, numerous intermediary stages, the rounds of the ladder, as it were, by which man may mount or dismount from level to another of his being."[2] Man may reject all forms of outer control, following the dictates of his expansive desires and be an undisciplined individualist; he may submit to the authority of religion; or he may choose an intermediary position and be regulated by an inner control to observe the law of measure proper to his nature as man: The first way is that of the naturist; the second, the religious, the third, the way of the humanist. In the first way man emancipates himself from outer authority but makes use of his emancipation not to work out standards but to fall into sheer spiritual anarchy. He is a "slave of his temperament, or a mechanism propelled by complexes and reactions, or a vortex of sensations, with no will to govern himself, no center of stability within the flux, no direction of purpose to use above the influences that carry him hither and thither."[3]

The second way is that of the traditional religions. "The Roman Catholic, the typical traditionalist," says Babbitt, "has in matters religious simply repudiated individualism. In this domain at least he submits to an authority that is 'anterior, superior, and exterior' to the individual."[4] But Babbitt was chary of ultimates; he felt that that he could not submit to dogma, he preferred to remain purely critical, hence he did not call in the supernatural in the guise of religion; he chose the third and middle path. The third way avoids the lowest level, the natural world, the plane of instinct, appetite, animality, lust, the animal passions or affections; yet it does not touch the third level, the supernatural world, which is the plane of spiritual beings, and the realm of eternal verities. On the middle plane he places man who, exercising the power of free-will, chooses to act in accordance with a dictate of that specifically human faculty within him which elevates him above the domain of nature and enables him to create his own manliness.

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[2] *Masters of Modern French Criticism,* 112; *cf. Rousseau and Romanticism,* xix.

[3] P. E. More, *"A Revival of Humanism"* in Bookman, March, 1930).

[4] "What I Believe" in *Forum, February,* 1930.

Babbitt takes his stand on this middle plane. He vehemently rejected the level of the mere naturalist, yet he maintained an open mind toward supernatural values. He writes, "The humanist certainly falls short of the saint, but he is just as certainly superior to the pure naturalist, whether stoic or epicurean, to anyone, in short, who would reduce human nature and phenomenal nature to a common law."[5] He believed that medieval religion tended to isolate man entirely from nature and to regard him as entirely dependent upon divine grace and his own free will, and, he adds, "the saint sought to attain perfection by the repression of all natural instincts." He recognized the superiority of the traditional view over that of the modern naturalistic doctrine:

> All the nobler aspirations of man, all his notions of conduct, had clustered around the old-time conception of the soul, and of the struggle between a higher and a lower self. The weakening of traditional belief has been followed by such an unsettling of all fixed standards, by such intellectual and moral chaos, that we are inclined to ask whether the modern man has not lost in force of will and character more than an equivalent of what he has gained in scientific knowledge of life. . . . The triumph of naturalism has been followed by a serious falling off, for the moment at least, in the the more purely spiritual activities of man.[6]

> In its medieval extreme the human spirit strove to isolate itself entirely from outer nature in a dream of the supernatural; now it tends to the other extreme, and strives to identify itself entirely with the world of phenomena.[7]

From his study of the philosophy of history Babbitt concluded that the Confucian influence "seems to offer more warrant than anything in our Occidental experience for the belief that man may, after all be a reasonable animal."[8] "My own attitude," he adds, "is one of extreme unfriendliness to every possible philosophy of history . . . which tends to make man a puppet of God, or the newer type which tends in all its varieties to make man the puppet of nature."

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[5] *Masters of Modern French Criticism,* 116.
[6] *Masters of Modern French Criticism,* 239.
[7] *Literature and the American College,* 90.
[8] *Democracy and Leadership,* 34.

What, then, does Babbitt hold positively about man? He holds, with Confucius, that what is specifically human in man may be defined as a principle of inner control. He finds in man a spontaneity that resists the flux and imposes upon it a human purpose;[9] a principle of superiority to the monstrous blind forces of nature;[10] a law of order and measure and decorum that, according to Cicero, distinguishes man from other living creatures;[11] and ". . the true mark of excellence in a man, as Pascal puts it, is his power to harmonize in himself opposite virtues and to occupy all the space between them *(tout l'entredeux)*. By his ability thus to unite in himself opposite qualities man shows his humanity, his superiority of essence over other animals."[12] We shall devote a later section to an inquiry into the nature of this inner control upon which Babbitt places supreme emphasis.

Babbitt holds that the naturalists have set up an imaginary dualism in society to take the place of the "real dualism in the breast of the individual." He recognizes in man a "self" that is capable of exercising control and another "self" that needs controlling. "The opposition," he says, "is well put by Cicero, one of the most influential of occidental humanists, 'The natural constitution of the human mind is twofold. One part consists in appetite, by the Greeks called *hormé* ("impulse") which hurries a man hither and thither; the other is reason, which instructs and makes clear what is to be done or avoided; thus it follows that reason fitly commands and appetite obeys.' "[13] Babbitt characterizes the failure of our contemporary life as the neglect of the inner life and the special type of control it imposes: a higher

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[9] *Masters of Modern French Criticism,* 253.

[10] *Ibid.,* 240.

[11] *Ibid.,* 114.

[12] *Literature and The American College,* 22. Babbitt further adds, "Man is a creature who is foredoomed to onesidedness, yet who becomes humane only in proportion as he triumphs over this fatality of his nature, only as he arrives at that measure which comes from tempering his virtues, each by its opposite." And on page 57, "That man is most human who can check his faculty, even if it be his master faculty, and his passion, even his ruling passion, in its mid-career, and temper it by its opposite."

[13] *On Being Creative,* xiv.

self that acts restrictively on the ordinary and impulsive self.[14] He asserts that we should postulate as a psychological fact, a free moral choice, a power in the heart of the individual that may lift him above physical nature. On the whole, like Aristotle, he is less concerned with what nature makes of man, than what man makes of himself.[15] What is most important is not man's power to act on the world, but his power to act on himself. Babbitt writes:

> This is at once the highest and most difficult task he can set himself if carried out with reference to a humane principle of selection, or what amounts to the same thing, to a true principle of restraint. By right selection even more than by the fullness of knowledge and sympathy, man proves his superiority of essence, and shows that he is something more than a mere force of nature. He is tested not only by what he does, but equally perhaps by what he refrains from doing.[16]

True personality, Babbitt held, is not something that like individuality is bestowed upon man simply because he has taken the trouble to be born. It is something that he must consciously win with reference to a standard set above his merely temperamental self.[17] Hence for him the end of man is not an other world felicity, a contemplation of the beatific vision, but rather a *working* in this world that aims at proportionateness through a cultivation of the law of measure. In this man's true happiness consists. Babbitt believed that in thus describing man's last end he was following Aristotle rather than the Stoics who said that virtue is the highest good; for Aristotle also said that the aim of man's existence is to live conformably to reason—to live a life of virtue—this is the good proper to a rational being, this will determine man's happiness. Like Aristotle he believes that moral virtue is a certain habit or faculty of choice, consisting in a mean suitable to our nature and fixed by reason in the manner in which a prudent man would fix it; yet he is really more in accord with the Stoics in stopping at virtue as an end, and in rejecting Aristotle's *contemplation* as the supreme act of man. Babbitt seems to regard

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[14] "The Critic and American Life" in *Forum,* February, 1928.

[15] *Democracy and Leadership,* 64.

[16] Literature and the American College, 56.

[17] *On Being Creative,* 126.

contemplation as a purely passive state and to prefer the activity, the energy of soul, which he always associates with will.

Aristotle's argument, however, is as follows:

> But if happiness be the exercise of virtue, it is reasonable to suppose that it will be the exercise of the highest virtue; and that will be the virtue or excellence of the best part of us.
>
> Now that part or faculty—call it reason or what you will—which seems naturally to rule and take the lead, and to apprehend things noble and divine—whether it be itself divine, or only the divinest part of us—is the faculty the exercise of which, in its proper excellence, will be perfect happiness.
>
> That this consists in speculation or contemplation we have already said.[18]

Yet Babbitt, in giving supremacy to will, would not agree with Aristotle that reason is the highest of our faculties, and that of all knowable things those that reason deals with are the highest; for Babbitt distrusts reason, which, he says, has so often led men astray. He feels the need of calling in some higher faculties, which he claims in fact to have discovered experimentally. Man is more than a rational animal; he has within him faculties which transcend his natural reason and will. His end, his happiness (in this life, for Babbitt speaks of no other) consists in the poise of proportionate living achieved by an act of selection, a final imposition on mere multiplicity of a scale of values.

Gorman Munson, in his exposition of Babbitt's humanism writes:

> The New Humanism commits itself first of all to a serious study of happiness. It does not dream of a geographical Paradise, but says, look to human nature! What is the constitution of human nature? How ought man to live according to this constitution? For in no other way but by obeying the laws of his being can he win enduring happiness. . . . Man's *inclination* is to remain enslaved to things the while he hopes they will not ride him harshly. His wish is to oppose his inclination to servitude, and to fight his way to psychological freedom.[19]

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[18] *Ethics,* X. 7, 1.

[19] *The Dilemma of the Liberated,* 116.

What then is the constitution of human nature, according to Babbitt? First of all he insists that man and nature are violently opposed. He quotes Emerson's lines:

> There are two laws discrete
> Not reconciled—
> Law for man and law for thing;
> The last builds town and fleet
> But it runs wild,
> And doth the man unking.

Since man is both of nature and above nature this opposition results in a conflict within man himself. Man recognizes a force within him that moves in an opposite direction from the outer impressions and expansive desires that together make up his ordinary or temperamental self. This is the doctrine that Babbitt sets against Rousseau's contention that man is essentially one, that he is entirely within nature, that he is naturally good and innocent, that he should trust his instinct; in short that he should identify himself with the flow of impressions and the constant upspring of his impulses.[20] The humanist holds that the basic fact of consciousness is a duality, that man is composed of a natural principle and a human principle, that self-development depends upon a struggle between the two principles, and that since man is naturally indolent, he must labor to intensify this struggle; he must not identify himself with the mechanical flow of his existence, but with "something not of his natural inclinations that makes for humanity."[21]

The first and very elementary step in any effective knowledge of human nature, Babbitt contends, is a discovery of a lack of coincidence between man's wants and his needs. "Whatever we may think of Christian theology, the Christian insight remains true that man suffers from a divided will: he needs to follow the law of the spirit and wants to follow the law of the members, so that he is a thoroughly paradoxical creature, for the most part at war with his own happiness."[22] Babbitt stresses the fact that

[20] *Democracy and Leadership,* 52.

[21] Gorman Munson, "Humanism of Today," in *Saturday Review of Literature,* December 28, 1929.

[22] *Democracy and Leadership,* 224.

the boundaries of man's being by no means coincide with those of physical nature. He quotes,

> Man hath all that Nature hath, but more;
> And in that more lies all his hope of good.[23]

In his opinion this "more" is rooted in the heart of the individual. "The old dualism put the conflict between good and evil in the breast of the individual, with evil so predominate since the Fall that it behooves man to be humble; with Rousseau this conflict is transferred from the individual to society."[24] That is why Babbitt detests a Romanticism which assumes human perfectibility, a Humanitarianism which considers mankind in the lump and leaves responsibility floating in the air. He calls upon Aristotle to witness to the inner life of the individual:

> Aristotle recognizes that man is the creature of two laws: he has an ordinary or natural self of impulse and desire and a human self that is known practically as a power of control over impulse and desire. If a man is to become human he must not let impulse and desire run wild but must oppose to everything excessive in his ordinary self, whether in thought or deed or emotion, the law of measure. This insistence on restraint and proportion is rightly taken to be the essence of not merely the Greek spirit but of the Classical spirit in general.[25]

This insistence upon man's dual nature and the inner life consequent upon it is fundamental in Babbitt's scheme. In fact it constitutes the heart of his challenge to the modern world. He is sounding the depths and heights of his philosophical speculation when he reaches the conclusion that "Between the man who puts his main emphasis on the inner life of the individual and the man who puts this on something else—for example, the progress and service of humanity—the opposition is one of first principles . . . In general, I commit myself to the position that we are living in a world that in certain important respects has gone wrong on first principles."[26]

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[23] *Literature and the American College,* 97.
[24] *Democracy and Leadership,* 76.
[25] *Rousseau and Romanticism,* 16.
[26] *Democracy and Leadership,* 26.

Professor Louis J. A. Mercier in his latest book[27] has reiterated this challenge for Babbitt and has brought out its deeper implications. Dr. Francis McMahon in his doctoral dissertation at The Catholic University of America,[28] has given a complete exposition of Babbitt's aesthetical, philosophical and sociological principles. Our purpose here is limited to an examination of his conception of the nature of man.

With Babbitt's dualism as a starting point we are led immediately to ask, What are the two natures discerned by him in man? He refers repeatedly to the higher and the lower nature of man. In what does each consist? Let us consider first the lower nature, or as Babbitt often calls it "the natural man." This is made up of natural reason and natural will, as well as the senses, lower imagination, and the sensuous appetites. We are not surprised to find the latter three as parts of man's lower nature, but we may ask why reason and will should be thus designated. Babbitt answers that history bears witness to the fact that reason has often been the sport and plaything of the imagination; because truth is infinite it can never be grasped by a finite creature like man, yet man goes seeking after truth but succeeds only in glimpsing half-truths. His error is in clinging to these tenaciously until he is forced to reject them for an opposite extreme—"to oscillate violently between extremes." We note that Babbitt uses the terms, 'intellect,' 'analytical intellect,' 'reason,' 'analytical reason' interchangeably; that is, he makes the whole of intellect consist in discursive speculation; he does not assign to it the ability to grasp the abiding real, to distinguish the One from the Many. Rather he insists that man's reason is itself a part of the flux, of the ever changing Many and hence must be disciplined by a higher unity. Yet reason has a very definite and important rôle to play, as we shall see, in coöperation with what Babbitt calls the higher imagination.

The natural will of man, following his natural reason, reaches out in the form of three lusts, the *"libido sentiendi, libido domi-*

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[27] L. J. A. Mercier, *The Challenge of Humanism* (New York), Oxford University Press, 1933).

[28] Francis E. McMahon, *The Humanism of Irving Babbitt* (Washington, Catholic University of America, 1931).

nandi, libido sciendi." It is attracted by the change and novelty in the world outside and it seeks to fill its expansive desires and to ride the whole personality. It needs to be kept in check by some more human principle of wise selection, by a power that can veto its impulsive wants. That power Babbitt calls the "higher will."

Now in what does man's higher nature consist? We shall let Babbitt make the transition:

> I not only have more to say of will and less of reason than the humanist of the Graeco-Roman tradition, but I also grant a most important role to imagination. If one does not, like Diderot, dismiss as "artificial" the conflict between a natural or expansive will and a specifically human will or the will to refrain, if, on the contrary, one insists on this conflict as a primordial fact of consciousness, one will be led, I believe, to the further conclusion that the outcome of this "civil war in the cave" will be determined by the attitude of the imagination; that the imagination, in other words, holds the balance of power between the higher and lower nature of man.[29]

For him the imagination is the great unifying power, but it may be used to help forward and symbolize man's union with the truths of reason, or the truths above reason, as well as with outer nature. This power, he says, reaches out and seizes analogies and so tends to establish unity. It is not mere sensuous or "lower" imagination, but a faculty which Scholastics would call intellect. Babbitt describes it as the intuition of the One. He writes, "The word [imagination] stands less for what one perceives, either inwardly or outwardly, than for what one conceives." "Now to 'conceive' is, in an almost etymological sense, to gather things together, to see likenesses and analogies and in so far to unify what were else mere heterogeneity."[30] This higher intuition is aware of the real amid the multiplicity of change. It is not the lower intuition, such as Bergson and the Romanticists have described as sensing the *élan vital,* but rather a spiritual faculty recognizing a *frein vital*—an inner check on man's natural self. Babbitt is not anti-intellectual; he does not seek truth in will

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[29] *Democracy and Leadership,* 10.

[30] Democracy and Leadership, 13.

instinct, sentiment, or action (as Schopenhauer, Rousseau, Bergson, James, Dewey and the whole pragmatic school would) but, though this higher intuition reaches the universal, it needs the analytic and discriminating power of reason to pronounce it real. Let us quote a statement which Babbitt sent to Professor Mercier as a summing up of his exact position:

> The relation of imagination and reason is one of the most difficult aspects of this whole subject. In view of the multiple meanings that have been attached to both 'reason' and 'imagination,' it is almost impossible to treat it without ambiguity. Regarding my own position, it is well to remember that I have said that 'though the imagination gives unity, it does not give reality.' Such reality as man may attain, if by reality one understands the achievement of universals, can issue only from a right coöperation between reason and imagination. If one emphasizes too exclusively the rôle of reason in the formation of universals, one is in danger of turning the universals into absolutes, of falling, in other words, into mere rationalism. True standards in any field result from the establishment of a right relationship between the power in man that *perceives,* the power that *conceives,* and the power that *discriminates.* A chief source of ambiguity in the use of the word imagination is that, historically, it has been applied at times to the power that perceives and at the same time to the power that conceives. I sum up my whole position by saying that the only thing that finally counts in this world is a concentration, at once imaginative and discriminating, on the facts. To a concentration of this kind on the more significant facts of human experience I often apply the phrase 'higher imagination.'[31]

Babbitt has incorporated the same explanation in the introduction to his last work. There, however he phrases it thus:

> I have sought to show that anyone who proceeds positively and critically in the realm of human values and at the same time hopes to achieve standards which, without being absolute, are still far from merely illusory, must seek to coordinate rightly in himself two powers: on the one hand a power which I term imagination that reaches out and seizes likenesses and analogies; secondly a power

[31] Quoted by Mercier in *The Challenge of Humanism,* 163n. *Cf.* also *Democracy and Leadership,* 11-17, where Babbitt discusses the subject from a somewhat different angle.

> which may be termed analytical reason that discriminates and tests this unifying activity of the imagination, not with reference to any theory, but to the actual data of experience.[32]

In an earlier work he had written

> By intellect I mean the power in man that analyzes and discriminates and traces causes and effects; for this power alone can determine whether the unity the imagination has established among the facts is real or whether it exists rather only in some 'realm of chimeras.'[33]

Babbitt's system is not, then, anti-intellectual; on the contrary he calls for a reinstatement of intellect while at the same time he postulates powers above it. He contends that it has been the constant experience of man in all ages that mere rationalism leaves him unsatisfied; that man craves in some sense or other an enthusiasm that will lift him above his merely rational self. "Wisdom," he writes, "is finally a matter of insight; but the individual needs to assimilate the best teaching of the past lest what he takes to be his insight may turn out to be only deceit or vain imagining."[34] Moreover, the imagination is in the service of the power in man that, Babbitt says, consciously and with reference to some sound model sets bounds to lawless expansion.[35]

What then is this still higher power in man to which Babbitt would press even the service of the "higher imagination?" Now we have reached Babbitt's supreme point of emphasis, the distinguishing mark of his humanism. Let us caution the reader that this "higher will" is not to be confused with the "natural will" which, though free, needs to be disciplined by a higher control. Men have always recognized within themselves a restraining force as indubitable as the fact of consciousness itself, steering them in a course becoming to them as men. This is, Babbitt claims, a specifically human trait. How does it stand in reference to man's other powers? Babbitt gives this description of the Christian view:

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[32] *On Being Creative,* xxx.

[33] *Democracy and Leadership,* 233. *Cf. ibid.,* 170, 299, 174.

[34] *On Being Creative,* xxxvii.

[35] *Ibid.,* 150.

> All the nobility of man is in reason, but this nobility is not in itself of much avail, inasmuch as reason is the sport and plaything of the imagination . . . self reliance is in vain. Man's only hope is in arbitrary will in the form of grace. To the sudden illumination of grace Pascal gives the name 'heart.' "The heart has reasons of which the reason knows nothing." Will in the form of grace is thus at odds with reason which is in turn at odds with imagination; whereas, if one is to be a sound individualist, it may be that reason and imagination need to coöperate in the service of the power in man that I have defined as the ethical will.[36]

We shall divide our discussion of this "higher" or "ethical" will into two parts. First, we shall consider this "will" in itself; second, in its relation to "grace." In view of the many misunderstandings that have arisen among Babbitt's critics and commentators on this crucial and basic concept in his synthesis, we shall use his own words as much as possible to clarify his doctrine on this point. Now his definition: "If one undertakes positively to define the higher will, one cannot perhaps hit upon a better phrase than that devised by Mr. Walter Lippmann to describe the belief that modern man has tended to lose—the belief, namely, that "there is an immortal essence presiding like a king over his appetites." This "immortal essence," so far as it has a bearing on actual conduct, means the imposition of limits on the expansive lusts of the natural man."[37]

Babbitt asserts the presence of such an inner control, an inner check, as a "given" psychological fact, yet he finds historical corroboration of its existence in all the great traditional religions and in Greek philosophy. He culls from the teachings of Buddha and Confucius their insistence upon an inner check, and among the Greeks a higher law "written in the heavens" to which man

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[36] *Democracy and Leadership,* 179.

[37] *On Being Creative,* xix. Bernard Bandler II, in his article "The Individualism of Irving Babbitt" in the Fall, 1929, volume of *The Hound and Horn,* adds this description: "Unknowable in its nature like electricity, irreducible to rational formulation since it is higher than reason, beyond the scope of scence and the competency of philosophy outside of space and time, the will to Mr. Babbitt is an object of direct perception, like a color, the essence of our humanity and superior to it. *Cf.* also *Masters of Modern French Criticism,* 231, 247, 281.

must submit if he would be truly human. It gives to man a higher liberty for it makes him free to act as man. "In the most commonplace personality," Babbitt writes, "there is a fraction however infinitesimal, which eludes all attempts at analysis; and this indefinable fraction, this residuum of pure and abstract liberty, [is] not to be expressed in terms of time and space."[38] In boldly affirming a principle in man superior to phenomenal nature, Babbitt sees an escape from the Bergonian surrender to the *élan vital* in favor of another spontaneity that is above the flux and acts counter to it. To the subrational Babbitt would oppose not merely the rational for, he says, "The opposite of the subrational is not the rational but the superrational, and this superrational and transcendent element in man is a certain quality of will. This quality of will may prove to be alone capable of supplying a sufficient counterpoise to the various 'lusts,' including the lust of feeling that results from the free unfolding of man's natural will."[39]

Babbitt agrees with Stuart Sherman that the great revolutionary task of the nineteenth century thinkers was to put man into nature; the great task of the twentieth century is to get him out again.[40] The primitivistic immersion of man in nature led to a denial of reason and to an obscuring of the dualism between man's natural self and a higher will. To reassert man's difference in kind and thereby reëstablish his right to a higher dignity, while at the same time conforming to the modern critical spirit, one must use the methods of the positivists while rising above their naturism. Here is Babbitt's technique:

> The modernists have broken with tradition partly because it is not sufficiently immediate, partly because it is not sufficiently experimental. Why not meet them on their ground and, having got rid of every ounce of unnecessary metaphysical and theological baggage, oppose to them something that is both immediate and experimental —namely the presence in man of a higher will or power of control?[41]

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[38] *Masters of Modern French Criticism,* 247.

[39] *On Being Creative,* 199. Also in Babbitt's introduction to Julian Benda's *Belphegor* (trans. S. G. I. Lawson) (New York, Payson Clarke, 1929).

[40] *On Being Creative,* 132.

[41] "Humanism: An Essay at Definition" in *Humanism and America,* 44.

> The positivist will plant himself first of all on the fact of insight and define it as the immediate perception of a something anterior to both thought and feeling, that is known practically as a power of control over both.[42]

Babbitt contends that this power of will is akin if not identical with Aristotle's "energy of soul"—the form of activity distinct from mere outer working—deemed by him appropriate for the life of leisure that he proposes as the goal of a liberal education; for the need of discipline and community of ideals enters into human nature no less than the craving for a free play of one's individual faculties.[43] The Christian tradition may also be marshalled forward to give testimony to this human activity:

> Against expansionists of every kind, I do not hesitate to affirm that what is specifically human in man and ultimately divine is a certain quality of will, a will that is felt in its relation to his ordinary self as a will to refrain. The affirmation of this quality of will is nothing new: it is implied in the Pauline opposition between a law of the spirit and a law of the members. In general the primacy accorded to will over intellect is Oriental. The idea of humility, the idea that man needs to defer to a higher will, came into Europe with an Oriental religion, Christianity. This idea has been losing ground in almost exact ratio to the decline of Christianity. Inasmuch as the recognition of the supremacy of will seems to me imperative in every wise view of life, I side in important respects with the Christian against those who have in the Occident, whether in ancient or modern times, inclined to give the first place either to the intellect or to the emotions. I differ from the Christian, however, in that my interest in the higher will and the power of veto it exercises over man's expansive desires is humanistic rather than religious.[44]

Babbitt claims that what is conspicuous in the whole transition from the medieval to the modern period is the failure to disengage the truths of the higher will from theology and to deal with them experimentally as "immediate data" of consciousness. Because he has done so he claims to be a constructive modern.

The naturalistic positivism that overlooks the element in man that moves in an opposite direction from mere temperament, is

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[42] *Rousseau and Romanticism,* 179.

[43] "Humanism: An Essay at Definition" in *Humanism and America,* 41.

[44] *Democracy and Leadership,* 6.

regarded by Babbitt as singularly onesided. It commits itself to a monism that Babbitt says, "is merely another name that man has invented for his own indolence and onesidedness and unwillingness to mediate between the diverse and conflicting aspects of reality."[45] If the dual nature of man is denied on the rationalistic plea that reason can give no explanation of it, Babbitt rejoins that reason cannot hope to formulate finally what is by definition above it; reason is only instrumental in its relation to the higher will. If the modernist uses the same instrument to grasp the workings of nature and bend them to the service of man, the new power which he achieves in nature will be of little avail to him if he is unable to manage himself. This is Babbitt's constant admonition.

> What is important in man in the eyes of the humanist is not his power to act on the world but his power to act on himself. This is at once the highest and most difficult task he can set himself if carried out with reference to a humane principle of selection, or what amounts to the same thing, to a true principle of restraint. By right selection even more than by fullness of knowledge and sympathy, man proves his superiority of essence, and shows that he is something more than a mere force of nature. He is tested not only by what he does, but equally perhaps by what he refrains from doing. . . . The humanist will insist on the distinction between energy and will, however much the present age seems to have forgotten it. A man may be a prodigy of energy and yet be spiritually indolent.[46]

Many of the ancients explained these inner workings in terms of fate; the modernists, on the contrary, find fatalism in a denial of any transcendent force and in a purely mechanistic interpretation of human behavior. Babbitt scores the naturalistic realists in the field of literature for aping such pseudo-science:

> Realists of the current type are in point of fact intimately allied with the psychologists—glandular, behavioristic and psychoanalytical —who whatever their divergence among themselves unite in the deterministic trend and therefore clash fundamentally with both religious and humanistic realists. The proper method of defending the freedom of the will would seem to be to insist upon it as a fact of

[45] *The New Laokoon,* 226.
[46] *Literature and the American College,* 56.

> experience, a fact so primary that the position of the determinist involves an evasion of one of the immediate data of consciousness in favor of a metaphysical dream. What is genuinely experimental in naturalistic psychology should, of course, be received with respect; but the facts of which it takes account in its experiments are unimportant compared with the facts that it either neglects or denies.[47]

Babbitt is thus in agreement with all humanists in vouching the freedom of the will, yet his explanation of its activity surpasses that of ordinary liberals by his superimposition upon the natural will of a higher will in man which is even free to check the expansiveness of lower human nature. No one insists more upon man's freedom than Babbitt and his school. Let us quote one of his disciples:

> While acknowledging that reason leads readily to a belief in necessity, whether that necessity be spiritual or mechanical, humanism is not willing to follow reason when it proposes a conclusion at variance with the manifest facts of experience. It is a matter of universal experience that we assume our power to will our next actions; life appears to be impossible on other terms. Common sense, as well as intuition, dictates the assumption of choice. This is the precarious but ineluctable dignity of man, clearly affirmed by Greek humanism and by Christianity, confusedly promulgated by a romanticism that lost itself in nature, and still accepted in practice by a scientific age that rejects it in theory. . . . In judging the acts of our fellows in the intercourse of daily life, we assume that they are free to choose, or, as we prefer to say when their actions affect ourselves, that they are responsible for what they do.[48]

And Babbitt adds, "Here at all events is the issue on which all other issues finally hinge; for until the question of moral freedom—the question whether man is a responsible agent or only a plaything of his impulses and impressions—is decided, nothing is decided."[49] Yet we must pause to hear him explain the type of liberty he extols:

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[47] "The Critic and American Life" in *Forum,* February, 1928.

[48] Norman Foerster, *Towards Standards* (New York, Farrar and Rinehart, 1930), 163.

[49] "The Critic and American Life."

> No more essential question can be asked regarding any man than whether he regards liberty primarily as a taking on or as a throwing off of limitations; a question that is inextricably bound up with that of the 'infinite.' . . . Once grant the romantic his notion of the infinite as a *desirable* escape from limitations and one might as well grant him everything. According to Aristotle and other Greeks, the infinite in this sense is bad. It makes against an orderly and proportionate view of life.[50]
>
> Liberty, to be humanized, must be tempered by true restraint, and not simply by strenuous. We must insist once more on our distinction between energy and will.
>
> A true principle of restraint involves constant reference, not merely to one's own temperament and aptitiudes, but to a more general human law; it implies not only an anxiety to express one's own mind, but to put this mind into some kind of accord with what Emerson calls "the constant mind of man."[51]

Yet Babbitt does not regard this constancy as any inflexible absolute but rather as a vital shaping, controlling and limiting of lawless expansion. The standards which it sets are living, flexible and intuitive. One might suppose that the feeling of propriety which Babbitt finds directing the acts of man is akin to the "oughtness" of Kant's categorical imperative and its duty for duty's sake sanction. Babbitt, however, finds Kant's view open to objection from the point of view of common sense:

> The categorical imperative is considered as something a priori, not based on experience. It is not a living intuition of a will that is set above the cosmic process (which includes a man's natural self) and that acts upon this cosmic process restrictively and selectively. It is rather a rigid and metaphysical abstraction that operates without reference to the individual or the special circumstances to which he needs to adjust himself. Moreover, it is, as I have pointed out, a will to act and not a will to refrain from acting.[52]

In fact Babbitt summarizes his whole teaching on the higher will by differentiating it from what he regards as unacceptable modern directives in the realm of moral values. In his "Essay at Definition" he explains that the higher will is "not the abso-

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[50] *On Being Creative,* 148.
[51] *Literature and the American College,* 74.
[52] *Democracy and Leadership,* 324.

lute, nor again the categorical imperative; not the organic nor still less the mechanical; finally, not the 'ideal' in any current sense of the term . . . Positively one may define it as the higher immediacy that is known in its relation to the lower immediacy—the merely temperamental man with his impressions and emotions and expansive desires—as a power of vital control (*frein vital*)."[53]

With this definition as a summary of the foregoing we turn now to an examination of the higher will in its relation to grace. Again we let Babbitt introduce the new topic:

> This transcendent quality of will—which is the source of humility and is, at the same time, immediate and intuitive—has often been associated traditionally with the operation of God's will in the form of grace.[54]
>
> It is this higher will that I have in mind when I raise the question whether something has not been omitted in our modern philosophies of life that may turn out to be the keystone of the arch. Now the assertion of this quality of will has been almost inseparably bound up in the Occident with dogmatic and revealed religion. The higher will has been identified with God's will, its operation with the doctrine of grace.[55]

Babbitt has many such passages, several of which we shall quote later, which have led some of his commentators, notably Professor Louis J. A. Mercier,[56] to form the conviction that Babbitt's "higher will" is just another name for "grace." Other critics have, on the contrary, censured Babbitt with the charge that his system dispenses with grace and that hence it is, in this respect, no better than the naturalistic schemes to which it is supposed to be opposed. Which of these contradictory opinions are we to accept—or is there room for mediation even here? We must let Babbitt's own words, as they are found in his written works, help us to make this decision. The higher will, Babbitt says, "has been very much bound up historically with the doctrine of grace and has tended to be obscured with the decline

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[53] *Humanism and America,* 40.

[54] "What I Believe" in *Forum,* February, 1930.

[55] *On Being Creative,* xvii.

[56] L. J. A. Mercier, *The Challenge of Humanism* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1933).

of this doctrine."[57] Might not the same be said of ordinary free-will? Again he says that the two have been "traditionally associated,"[58] and seems rather to deplore this fact. "The quality of will that I am discussing and that rightly deserves to be accounted superrational, has, however been associated in traditional Christianity not primarily with man's will, but with God's will in the form of grace. The theologians have indulged in many unprofitable subtleties apropos of grace. One cannot afford, however, as has been the modern tendency, to discard the psychological truth of the doctrine along with these subtleties. The higher will must simply be accepted as a mystery that may be studied in its practical effects, but that, in its ultimate nature, is incapable of formulation."[59] This passage seems to favor Professor Mercier's view, as also will the following: "Though the higher will in man is not amenable to the methods of the laboratory, it may nevertheless be asserted as a primordial fact—a something of which one is immediately aware. This awareness, to be sure, exists in very different degrees in different individuals, so that one encounters in a purely psychological form the equivalent of the mystery of grace."[60]

Let us note, however the word "superrational" in the former quotation and remember that Babbitt regards both the higher imagination and the higher will as superrational. Is superrational in his mind the same as supernatural? If so, is the higher imagination also to be accounted supernatural? Is man, then, to know the universal only through grace? Another passage may help to clarify Babbitt's use of these terms: "The truth is that the terms [Pascal's, 'sentiment,' 'instinct,' 'heart,'] refer to a superrational quality of will identified with the divine will in the form of grace, and that it is this quality of will that has been weakened by the decline of traditional religion. Faith in a higher will, as it appears in Pascal, acted restrictively on the 'lusts' of the natural man . . . One is prompted to inquire at once whether one can secure this faith in a transcendent truth simply by an

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[57] *Democracy and Leadership,* 226.
[58] *On Being Creative,* 133.
[59] *Humanism and America,* 39.
[60] *On Being Creative,* xviii.

appeal to reason; whether a true transcendence does not call for the affirmation, either in the Christian or some other form, of a higher will."[61] We are inclined to conclude that Babbitt, while quoting Pascal as a typical Christian, prefers to affirm the higher will *in some other form.*

In his article, "President Eliot and American Education," Babbitt explains his position from another point of view. We shall quote rather at length because the passage is typical of Babbitt's technique:

> One may discover an important agreement not only between different forms of humanism but between humanism and religion—the assumption, namely that man needs to be disciplined in his natural self to some standard; that he needs, in short, in the almost literal sense of the term to undergo conversion. Though conversion involves a facing about or turning away from the natural man, it may be conceived very differently. The Augustinian Christian, for example, conceives of it somewhat melodramatically as brought about by a sudden irruption of divine grace. For the Aristotelian, on the other hand, it is to be accomplished rather by the gradual formation from childhood of the right habits. In all its forms, however, conversion implies an opposition in the heart of the individual between the expansive desires and a principle of control.
>
> The exercise of this principle of control requires the putting forth of a special quality of effort or will. What I have termed the "wisdom of the ages" is, in short, primarily concerned with the problems of the inner life, and in its attitude towards these problems it is dualistic. The activity that it promotes is on the religious level summed up in the word meditation. Genuine meditation involves a subordination of the natural man to a higher will—humility, in short, a word that in the present naturalistic era has almost lost its true meaning. The subordination to the higher will may, as in the more austere forms of Christianity, amount to a renunciation of the desires of the natural man. The humanist, on the other hand, is satisfied with imposing on these desires a law of measures or decorum. His program may be summed up in the word mediation. . . . To get standards one will need to insist on the specifically human elements in man that have been eliminated by the naturalists. How complete this elimination has been may be seen in practically all forms of recent psychology."[62]

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[61] In Babbitt's Introduction to *Belphegor* by Julian Benda (Trans. S. J. I. Lawson) (New York, Payson Clarke, 1929). Also in *On Being Creative,* 195, 196.

[62] *Forum,* January, 1929.

Babbitt prides himself upon being an individualist. He prefers the critical and humanistic way of Aristotle to what he calls Plato's growing sense of the dependence of man upon God which, he adds, foreshadows Augustine and the reign of grace;[63] yet he does not wish to be confused with the individualist of the naturalistic type of whom he writes:

> The individualistist of the naturalistic type has not only discarded grace but along with it the whole notion of a transcendent will. In short, he does not grant that man needs to be humble. Those who are convinced of the unsoundness of this attitude may simply repudiate individualism and revert to a purely traditional attitude—the attitude that is usually associated, at least in matters of faith and morals, with the Roman Catholic Church; or again he may, like P. E. More, seek to steer a middle course between a traditional authority in religion that has become so absolute as to be oppressive and the mere anarchy of private judgment.
>
> My own attempt to solve the problem of standards is . . . distinctly different . . . I am seeking to defend what I would define as a positive and critical humanism.[64]

And Babbitt has elsewhere declared that "To be genuinely religious or humanistic, one must assert whether in the form of divine grace *or of free moral choice,* a power in the heart of the individual that may lift him above physinature."[65] We have italicized the above words because we believe that the disjunctive is not a mere linking of equivalents, but, in Babbitt's opinion, a real disjunction of which the latter alternative represents his position. Mercier would equate the two; we believe, however that it is the unfortunate error of Babbitt's otherwise commendable efforts that he could never bring himself to write "grace *and* free moral choice." To do so would have meant the expelling of his agnosticism, the accepting of the real supernatural, not merely the superrational, order and man's destiny in it; yet in doing so he would have found that "more" in man in which lies all his hope for good.

We must remember that Babbitt had no such faith and that his

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[63] *Democracy and Leadership,* 31.
[64] *On Being Creative,* xiii.
[65] *Democracy and Leadership,* 64.

philosophizing never brought him conviction of those premises which make the Scholastic interpretation of the supernatural seem rational. The ethic which he prescribes is concerned only with this life because he never looked to another. Babbitt never denied the superiority of religion over humanism, in fact, he tells us that if a choice between the naturalism and supernaturalism had to be made he would place himself unhesitatingly on the side of the supernatural.[66] He believed, however, that as a humanist he held a certain tactical superiorty over the religious insofar as his postiion might be regarded as a common forum in which Catholic and non-Catholic alike may meet to arbitrate for the good of man.

Babbitt declares that he has found in his "law of measure" a formula that will make for man's moral well-being. He does not urge the exercise of the higher will beyond the subduing of man's desires to the law of measure; but he admits that it may be carried much further "until it amounts to a turning away from the desires of the natural man altogether—the 'dying to the world' of the Christian."[67] Yet he does not claim that every man can qualify for such an exalted vocation, hence he says: "The humanist is equally on his guard against the excess of sympathy and the excess of restraint; he would have a restrained liberty and a sympathetic selection. He holds that the man of today, if he does not, like the man of the past take on the yoke of a definite doctrine and discipline, must at least do inner obeisance to something higher than his ordinary self, whether he calls this something God, or, like the man of the Far East, call it his higher Self, or simply the Law. Without this inner principle man can only oscillate between opposite extremes . . . With the restraint, on the other hand, he can harmonize these extremes and occupy all the space between them."[68] With the decline of the inner life, Babbitt contends, there has been a weakening of control over the expansive lusts of the natural man—whether the lust of knowledge or the lust of sensation or the lust of power.

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[66] "Humanism: An Essay at Definition" in *Humanism and America.*

[67] *Ibid.,* 47.

[68] *Literature and the American College,* 60.

We may ask how Babbitt accounts for these lusts in man. The Christian believes that man lost his original justice and the proper balance of his faculties as a penalty of the Fall. The effects of original sin, he says, are a darkening of the understanding, a weakening of the will and a strong inclination to evil. Babbitt answers "I hold no brief for this dogma [of original sin], yet there is evidence that the discarding of it has meant the loss of something so essential that on its recovery in some form may hinge the very survival of civilization."[69] And again

> If the Protestant Church is at present threatened with bankruptcy, it is not because it has produced an occasional Elmer Gantry. The true reproach it has incurred is that, in its drift towards modernism, it has lost its grip not merely on certain dogmas, but simultaneously on the facts of human nature. It has failed above all to carry over in some modern and critical form the truth of a dogma that unfortunately receives much support from these facts—the dogma of original sin.[70]

Moreover, the human trait of evading moral responsibility which Babbitt says we can observe in ourselves and others "gives some positive justification to the theological emphasis on the old Adam. This trait may be defined as spiritual indolence, a disinclination to oppose to one's expansive desires any will to refrain, and then to shift the blame on something or somebody else for the unpleasant consequences."[71] This is one of the truths that Babbitt had in mind when he declared, "I hold that at the heart of genuine Christianity are certain truths which have already once saved Western civilization and, judiciously employed, may save it again."[72]

In his very first book Babbitt predicted evils which are upon us today. He saw men more and more ridding themselves of religious restraint and yet moving from an anarchical individualism and heading toward the dream of a utopian collectivism. "The issue," he wrote, "is somewhat obscured at present because the moral habits of an age that had a definite doctrine

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[69] *On Being Creative,* xxxix.

[70] "The Critic and American Life" in *Forum,* February, 1928.

[71] "What I Believe" in *Forum,* February, 1930.

[72] *Democracy and Leadership,* 22.

and discipline survive for some time after the doctrine itself has become obsolete[73] . . . But the traditional checks and inhibitions will gradually grow fainter, and society will then feel, as indeed it is already beginning to feel, the full impact of a brutal naturalism. Our lapse into moral impressionism is also hidden from us by the rapid advance of physical science. We assume that because we are advancing rapidly in one direction we are advancing rapidly in all directions; yet from what we know of man in history we would be justified in assuming the exact opposite."[74] Physical progress does not insure moral progress; nor is progress always to be reckoned in terms of expansion. Moral progress seems to correlate higher with restraint. That is why Babbitt says that to act according to the ethical will is, so far as the natural man is concerned, to pull back, limit, select. "This supremely human act of selection the rationalistic naturalist would turn over to nature."[75] Now, nature's law is to expand, yet Babbitt in setting out to establish a casual sequence between the facts of human nature recognizes other facts that those of expansion. Man grows in the perfection proper to his own nature in almost direct ratio to his growth in restraint and self-control. "Furthermore," Babbitt concludes, "all the experience of the past, cries, as though with a thousand tongues, through the manifold creeds and systems in which it has been found very imperfectly formulated, that the highest human law is a law of concentration."[76]

He adds, though, that however different the law for man and the law for thing may be in other respects, they have one important resemblance: neither law can be finally formulated, for the simple reason that each law "takes hold on the infinite,—the one upon the infinitely large, the other upon the infinitely small." Babbitt, we have said, is chary of ultimates; he insists that the higher will and the law that it imposes cannot be explained ultimately, hence in the one instance where he describes the higher will as specifically human and "ultimately divine" we do not believe that he implied any theistic affirmation, but that he

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[73] Compare Chesterton's remark that the world today is living on its Catholic capital. *The Thing* (London, Sheed and Ward, 1922), 22.

[74] *Literature and the American College,* 62.

[75] *Democracy and Leadership,* 228.

[76] *The New Laokoon,* 202.

used the phrase to indicate that this will transcends reason and hence is incapable of final formulation. We believe that Mercier overworks this phrase and thus attributes to Babbitt conclusions which he never drew. If Babbitt really admitted to himself that anything could be ultimately divine, in the strict theological sense, he would have gone the whole length and would have accepted the logical necessity of a Divine Lawgiver and all the ultimate formulae that He has prescribed.

Though Babbitt admits that formulae are excellent he cautions us that they must always be provisional, flexible and intuitive. "We need to piece out our formulae with our intuitions; intuitions of the Many if we are dealing with the natural order; intuitions of the One if we are dealing with man's peculiar domain." Ludwig Lewisohn in his cutting censure of the humanist standard writes:

> Babbitt declares it to 'rest on an immediate perception of what is normal and human.' On intuition, then. And on whose intuition? On his who has 'the ethical or generalizing imagination.' Well, and how is anyone's possession of that imagination to be determined? And on what definition of it? In brief, every rigid standard implies a still higher and more rigid one and that still a higher and so on *ad infinitum.* Roman Christianity has met this difficulty by making the Church an eternally true and infallible interpreter of revealed wisdom; orthodox Judaism has partially met it by assuming that all truth promulgated by righteous men in any age was from all eternity implicit in the Torah. It is evident that without some such assumption external standards or criteria, standards anterior to practice and criteria independent of continuous observation of empiric facts, are hopelessly unattainable by such a being as man in such a world as the present.[77]

Babbit might have replied that this standard, while anterior and exterior to man, is, at the same time, present interiorly in all men. This is what gave him confidence in his position as a critical humanist. He saw no reason why he should accept any dogma from without as long as he could find the Law within himself. This concluding paragraph might give the fairest statement of his hesitancy:

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[77] L. Lewisohn, *Expression in America* (New York, Harpers, 1932).

> A fact which seems to emerge from this ampler survey of the experience of the race is that one may get humanistic and even religious purpose into one's life without indulging in ultimates and absolutes after the metaphysical fashion of Aristotle or the theological fashion of of traditional Christianity. One may well come to agree with certain great Asiatics, in contrast at this point with the European intellectual that the good life is not primarily something to be *known* but something to be *willed.* There is warrant for the belief that if a man *acts* on the light he already has the light will grow. As for the final stages of the path that thus opens progressively, I for one should be content to say with Cardinal Newman, though not perhaps in quite the sense he intended:
>
> I do not ask to see
> The distant scene—one step enough for me.[78]

From the foregoing we may summarize Irving Babbitt's concept of man as follows: Man's nature is dual; his lower nature consists in those powers usually ascribed to a rational animal, but he has in addition a higher, superrational nature made up of the "higher imagination" and the "higher will." It is the higher will that makes man specifically human. "What is specifically human in man and ultimately divine is a certain quality of will, a will that is felt in relation to his ordinary self as a will to refrain."

We will admit with Babbitt that there is a duality in man, but we contend that the dualism described by him is not between the natural and the supernatural in the Christian sense of nature and grace, but between two phases of nature itself. For, Babbitt defines the higher imagination as the power which grasps the universal and knows first principles; this power we attribute to the intellect which by its natural light can abstract the universal, and by its natural habit recognizes first principles. Now this power of simply apprehending intelligible truth is not a power distinct from reason which must advance from one thing to another to know an intelligible truth. In man intellect and reason are the same power.[79] There is no duality of powers so far.

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[78] *On Being Creative,* xxxv.

[79] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I, q. 79, art. 8, c. "Intelligere enim est simpliciter veritatem intelligibilem apprehendere; ratiocinari autem est procedere de uno intellecto ad aliud, ad veritatem intelligibilem cognoscendam."

When Babbitt describes the higher will he at times identifies it with the Law itself, at times with the power that recognizes the Law, at times with the power that makes men conform to the Law. It has been declared by some that this higher will is grace, and that thus Babbitt in recognizing it has assented to the supernatural. We are not questioning the existence of grace in Babbitt or any other man, but we insist that the power which he describes is purely natural.

First, the higher will as the Law: Here is how St. Thomas would explain it:

> Law, being a rule and measure, can be in a person in two ways: in one way as in him that rules and measures; in another way, as in that which is ruled and measured, since a thing is ruled and measured, insofar as it partakes of the rule or measure. Wherefore, since all things subject to Divine providence are ruled and measured by the eternal law . . . it is evident that all things partake somewhat of the eternal law, insofar as, namely, from its being imprinted on them, they derive their respective inclinations to their proper acts and ends. Now among all others, the rational creature is subject to Divine Providence in the most excellent way, insofar as it partakes of a share of Providence, by being provident both for itself and for others. Wherefore it has a share of the Eternal Reason, whereby it has a natural inclination to its proper act and end: and this participation of the eternal law in the rational creature is called the natural law.[80]

In the Scholastic sense, then, Babbitt's Law would be described not as *will,* but as a participation of human *reason* in the Eternal Reason of God.

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[80] *Ibid.,* I-II, q. 91, art. 2, c. "Lex, cum sit regula et mensura, duplicitur potest esse in aliquo; uno modo sicut in regulante et mensurante; alio modo sicut in regulato et mensurato; quia inquantum participat aliquid de regula vel mensura, sic regulatur vel mensuratur. Unde cum omnia quae divinae providentiae subduntur, a lege aeterna regulentur et mensurentur, ut ex dictis patet, manifestum est quod omnia participant aliqualiter legem aeternam, inquantum scilicet ex impressione ejus habent inclinationes in proprios actus et fines. Inter caetera autem rationalis creatura excellentiori quodam modo divinae providentiae subjacet, inquantum et ipsa fit providentiae particeps, sibi ipsi et aliis providens. Unde et in ipsa participatur ratio aeternae, per quam habet naturalem inclinationem ad debitum actum et finem; et talis participatio legis aeternae in rationali creatura lex naturalis dicitur."

Second, the higher will as the power that recognizes the law: The recognition of the practical principles of the law is not a power but a habit of reason to which Scholastics give the name, synderesis:

> *Synderesis* is not a power but a habit; though some held that it is a power higher than reason; while others said that it is reason itself, not as reason, but as a nature. . . . The first practical principles, bestowed upon us by nature, do not belong to a special power, but to a special natural habit, which we call *synderesis.* Whence *synderesis* is said to excite good, and to murmur at evil, inasmuch as the first principles we proceed to discover, and judge of what we have discovered.[81]

This habit is sometimes called conscience, though properly conscience is an act, *i. e.,* knowledge applied to an individual. Reason is the power, synderesis is the habit, conscience is the particular act.[82]

Third, the higher will as the power that makes man conform to the Law: Because man is rational he moves towards an end by his free-will which is the faculty of reason and will.[83]

The higher imagination and the higher will are just special aspects of man's natural powers which Babbitt would call separate powers. By postulating these special "superrational" powers he thought he had found an "equivalent" of grace; but, as we shall see in the following chapter, it is precisely because these specifically human powers cannot insure perfect rectitude permanently in all men and because man is destined to a super-

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[81] *Ibid.* I, q. 79, art. 12, c. "Synderesis non est potentia, sed habitus; licet quidam posuerint synderesim esse quandam potentiam ratione altiorem, quidam vero dixerint eam esse ipsam rationnem, non ut est ratio, set ut est natura. . . . Principia operabilium nobis naturaliter indita non pertinent ad specialem potentiam, sed ad specialem habitum naturalem, quem dicimus synderesim. Unde et synderesis dicitur instigare ad bonum et mumurare de malo, inquantum per prima principia procedimus ad inveniendum, et judicamus inventa."

[82] *Ibid.* I, q. 79, art. 13, c.

[83] *Ibid.* I-II, q. 1, art. 2, c. "Illa ergo quae rationem habent, seipsa movent in finem, quia habent dominium suorum actuum per liberum arbitrium, quod est "facultas voluntatis et rationis."

natural end that he has need of grace. Though man even before the Fall had need of grace and enjoyed its help from the moment of creation, this grace was certainly not "specifically human" else even sin could not have taken it from man without destroying his human nature. Those who stress the fact that Babbitt describes the higher will as ultimately divine, and acclaim it as supernatural, forget to stress equally that in the same sentence Babbitt also characterizes it as *specifically human.* On the other hand reason, and the natural law insofar as it relates to man, is specifically human; yet the natural law because it is part of the eternal law may be designated "ultimately divine."

Mr. Babbitt made a commendable effort to rise above naturalism, indeed he succeeded in advancing creditably beyond mere monistic determinism, but he left man with only his natural powers. He thought that these would suffice; had he become convinced of their insufficiency, had he pursued even these powers source or to their end, he would in deed have placed himself "on the side of the supernaturalists."

CHAPTER IV

The Humanism of Paul Elmer More

Paul Elmer More, like his comrade-at-arms, Irving Babbitt, starts with the conviction that any appreciation of literature and art must be founded upon a true philosophy of life. Both set out as individuals to examine the great traditions of the past in order to reconstruct a basis of value in human life; both felt assured that to do so was the only escape from a surrender to the onrush of naturalism which was threatening to dominate our age and to trod under foot all that was sacred, noble, even human, in man. If human dignity was to be defended, it was necessary that it be firmly reëstablished on rock bottom principles. Both Babbitt and More felt it their special assignment to find and to define these principles and to challenge the world with their definitions. Though they never lost touch with each other, their scouting brought them through different routes, yet when they compared notes their maps of life so agreed that their names have been coupled as the co-founders of the revival of Humanism. They agree in many important respects, yet we shall soon note that they differ in as many important issues. It has been said that More's stand is the logical outcome of Babbitt's position. We shall let the reader judge that after More's philosophy has been presented, at any rate we do not wish to confound the two so we shall let Dr. More speak for himself.

What is his concept of man? We note first of all that More accepts Aristotle's placement of man in the cosmic scheme:

> Man in the Aristotelian scheme is both of nature and above nature; as an animal he belongs to the realm of unconscious ends, while as a human being he possesses in addition to his animal instincts the faculty of consciously directive purpose. Here, in this faculty of conscious purpose, begins the field of conduct, of ethics and statecraft and religion, wherein a man makes *of himself* by free choice, under certain limitations, that which he will; and herein lies the field of art, wherein man makes *for himself* that which he will. The recognition of this dualism of the natural and the supernatural

> in man (or of a higher and lower nature, for the word "nature" is as unstable as the sea) is precisely the philosophy of humanism, as contrasted with the philosophy of naturalism which denies that the distinctive mark of man is a consciously directive will.[1]

In this one brief statement More has exposed the groundwork of his system with a clarity and precision too often lacking in his confreres and critics. Like Babbitt, he plants himself on the immediate fact of the duality of man's nature; for him, all forms of monism are simply monomanias. He recognizes this dualism in himself and he found it the basic doctrine of all great religions. His studies of the Greek Tradition, which to him means the Platonic tradition though he would not have it confused with Neo-Platonism, give him philosophical justification for this fundamental intuition. When Plato distinguishes the world of Ideas from the phenomenal world, the abiding One from the changing Many, Paul Elmer More recognizes his own distinction and opposition of an "inner check" and the incessant flux. We can develop this explanation more fully only after we have heard More describe the life of man in the world of flux:

> The life of man consists of impulses which spring from the coming together of inner desires and outer impressions. By the word desires is here not meant the intelligent want of a definite object, but the mere outreaching of vital energy. Desires and impressions, so far as our knowledge attains, cannot exist independently, that is to say, there can be no living organism without the constant interaction of an inner vital energy and an enveloping world. Impulses tend to pass into physical and mental activities, of the latter of which many belong to our animal functions and scarcely reach to the senses. Mental activities react in the form of new desires, physical activities in the form of new impressions. Certain activities are beneficial to our organization, others are detrimental. The sum of desires and impressions we call the great self-moving, incessant flux.
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> Besides the flux there is also that within man which displays itself intermittently as an inhibition upon this or that impulse, preventing its prolongation in activity, and making a pause or eddy, so to speak, in the stream. This negation of the flux we call the inner check. It

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[1] *The Demon of the Absolute. New Shelburne Essays, Volume I,* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1928), x.

> is not the mere blocking of one impulse by another, which is a quality of the confusion of the flux itself, but a restraint upon the flux exercised by a force contrary to it.[2]

It is by the repeated exercise of this inner check that we become conscious of two elements in our being—the inner check and the stream of impulses—as coexistent and coöperative, yet essentially irreconcilable forces. When the above quoted essay was written in 1913, More still exhibited some of the agnosticism that we found in Babbitt. It might be well to note here for the benefit of a reader who might not know the man, that Paul Elmer More has since embraced a form of Anglican Christianity, or Catholicity as he calls it; hence many of his definitions of an earlier date need to be compared with and perhaps supplemented by his later decisions. Thus in this same essay he writes, "What, if anything, lies behind the inner check, what it is, why and how it acts or neglects to act, we cannot express in rational terms. Of the ultimate source of desires and impressions, and the relation of the resulting flux of impulses to the inner check in that union which we call ourselves, we are darkly ignorant."[3] In 1921 a bit of scepticism still lingers with him, but it is couched in terms more in accord with tradition. In explaining and making his own, Plato's teachings on justice and the soul, More concedes, "Sometimes our real personality seeks to reside in that portion of our being which is divine and uncontaminated by the world, in the soul, that is to say considered apart from the body and the contacts with phenomena, while at other times we are more conscious of a division of our being which opens down into the depths of personality. But withal the 'philosophy of the soul' is to strive to behold it in its purer essence, stripped and cleansed of its muddy vestments however these may be conceived."[4]

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[2] "Definitions of Dualism" in *Shelburne Essays VIII* (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1913), 247.

[3] *Ibid.*, 248.

[4] *The Religion of Plato* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1921), 55-56. More adds in a footnote that St. Paul at one time contrasts πνεῦμα, "spirit," and σάρξ, "flesh" and at another time alters this opposition to one of "spirit," and ψυχή, "soul." "He differs from Plato normally

Still later More admits with Aristotle that the distinctive mark of natural things is an inner purpose, a working within them of a final cause, which in man is consciously directive towards his last end. Now, Dr. More admits that this last end is supernatural, hence he is in no way embarrassed in admitting that his dualism may be between the natural and the supernatural orders. For him, however, free will and purpose are sufficiently specific traits to distinguish humanity from nature, or, he adds "if you prefer, from the rest of nature." And at this point he adds a note on the use of the words natural and supernatural:

> "A certain amount of ambiguity adheres inevitably from historical usage to the words 'natural' and 'supernatural.' One may, and often does, limit the term 'nature' to that which is common to all animals including man, and designate the distinguishing faculty of man as 'supernatural.' Or one may and often does, speak of that which pertains to man alone as his 'higher nature,' while that which man possesses in common with other animals is called his 'lower nature.' In this case the 'supernatural' will properly designate the other worldly elements of religion whether known by revelation or by intuition.[5]

More brings out his conviction of the dual nature of man, as opposed to the growing monistic trend, most decisively in a noteworthy passage which we quote in full:

> Against those who teach that man is totally submerged in natural law, the humanist lays stress on that in man which distinguishes him generically from other animals and so in one part of his composite being lifts him out of the more narrowly defined kingdom of nature; and the humanist assumes for himself this title as opposed to the naturalist because this superadded element, or faculty, however named, is what marks man off as *human*. Against those who still

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in regarding the "spirit" as a power introduced into man from above rather than as an integral part of man: yet he becomes Platonic when he writes of man's self, his ego, torn between these two contending powers, as neither "spirit" alone nor "soul" (or "flesh") alone, but somehow as both of these at once. . . . I cannot see that the modern study of psychology has brought us one whit nearer to the elucidation of this mystery. We are one, and we are two; and this is all that dualism ventures to pronounce."

[5]. "A Revival of Humanism" in *Bookman,* March, 1930.

hold that man is only a fragmentary cog in the vast machine which we call the universe, moved by the force of some relentless, unvarying, unconscious law, the humanist asserts that we are individual personalities, endowed with the potentiality of free will and answerable for our choice of good or evil. Against those who reduce man to a chaos of sensations and instincts and desires checking and counter-checking one another in endlessly shifting patterns, the humanist points to a separate faculty of inhibition, the inner check or the *frein vital,* whereby those expansive impulses may be kept within bounds and ordered to a design not of their making. Against those who proclaim that man can only drift, like a rudderless ship, with the weltering currents of change, the humanist maintains that he is capable of self-direction, and that character, as different from native temperament, is a growth dependent on clarity and strength of purpose. Against those who, to appease the stings of conscience, assure us that we are what we are by no fault of our own, that as we have no responsibility for our character, so the lesson of wisdom is to shuffle off any sense of regret or remorse, or fear; and against those who go further in flattery and, through each and every appearance of delinquency, assert the instinctive total goodness of unredeemed nature—against these the humanist contends that as free agents we are accountable for defalcations and aberrations, and that self-complacency is the deadliest foe to human excellence. On the other hand, the humanist will not stand with those who jeer at human nature, as if men were in no better state than rats in a trap, rushing distractedly hither and thither, hurling themselves upon their bars in a pitiable frenzy of impotence.[6]

Paul Elmer More's special master and guide is Plato. He has made profound studies of Plato's works and has done extensive reading in the writings of early Greek Fathers. He believes that he is following them in his interpretations of religion and his concept of man. Let us see how he understands Plato's dualism:

At the root of Plato's philosophy lies the perception of a dividing cleft between our experience of that which comes to us as stable, eternal, immutable, unitary, possessible, joyous, peace giving, somehow right, and our experience of that which comes to us as shifting, ephemeral, transient, various, elusive, lingled of pleasure and pain, distracting, somehow weighted with evil; on the one side our knowledge of Ideas, on the other side our opinions of phenomena. Yet this world of our experience is still one world, a cosmos, though it com-

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[6] "A Revival of Humanism" in *Bookman,* March, 1930.

> bines within itself, and without confusion, two utterly disparate natures; and I who live in this double experience am still one person.[7]

That in man which convinces him of this dualism, is in More's scheme, conscious directive purpose. In other words, More finds in man as well as in the rest of nature some unifying purpose; in man this purpose is not deterministic but rather is consciously directive. From this teleology he concluded the existence of a supreme Designer which he identifies with Plato's God, or the Highest Good. He believes that the early Christian conception of the Christ as the Word of God, the Logos, is the culmination of the Greek Tradition. The Ideas as the model of perfection, the eternal pattern, became identified with the Logos, through whom, hypostasized as God's eternal Wisdom and Son, God created a world in His own likeness. "The lower cause of Plato, the dark impediment of Necessity, is transformed in the Christian conception of Sin, introduced into the world by the Fall and at last to be redeemed by the Incarnation."[8] "The Son of God and the Logos of God are one and the same: the Son as the Logos is identified with the creative wisdom and purpose of deity, the Logos as the Son is hypostasized into a person beside the person of the Father. At one bound the philosophy of the logos has become a religion."[9]

In such terms More clinches his apologia for accepting the definition of the Council of Chalcedon. What has it to do with his concept of man? The Logos that became incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ is the sublime realization of the perfect unity of Divine wisdom and human life. Yet every man, made to the image of God, in some way manifests Divine wisdom, his very being is stamped, as it were, with divine purpose. Hence, in the Greek use of the word, More might say that man is a *logical* being. "By virtue of that faculty he, and only he, enters into the life of animals and comprehends the actions which they perform under the impulse of a reason not consciously their own . . . It enables him to behold invisible reasons that lie behind the

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[7] *Christ the Word* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1927), 251.
[8] *Ibid.*, 262.
[9] *Ibid.*, 298.

forms and motions of things visible."[10] The phenomenal world, including plants and animals, is a manifestation of some controlling logos, yet it is not *logical* in the sense that it consciously possesses logos. This logos is "not only the manifestation of design in the world, but the wisdom of foresight *(pronoia),* a divine *purpose* realizing itself through the ages in the economy of creation and salvation, 'the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose *(prothesis)* which He purposed in Christ Jesus.' "[11]

More accepts the explanation given by St. Athanasius to the words of Genesis: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness"—that the Father is here speaking to the Son (hence the "us") ; the Logos-Son is the image, whereas man is created in the likeness of the image, to possess, as it were "certain shadows of the Logos and so not be the Logos but logical." More adds that it "follows also that when we speak of the human logos we do not think of this as a hypostasis distinct from the hypostasis of man himself, but as the characteristic quality of man as man."[12] This purpose has always been in man and it explains the unity of all genuine human wisdom. As Justin declared "all the wisdom of the philosophers, all the precepts of the lawgivers and the example of the sages, had been a response in the heart of man to the manifestation of the logos in the world."[13]

In the comely order of the world, that which we mean by calling it a cosmos, More sees a reflection of the logos as creative purpose and divine providence; while in the soul of man the logos answers to the logos not as an inert reflection, but as a conscious participation. The most insidious and obstinate enemy of religion, More declares, was, and is, "the subservience of the mind content to see in the world only a huge fatalistic mechanism, or a heterogeneous product of chance or, as modern Darwinians would have it, a monstrous combination of both."[14]

This whole explanation of the Logos as given by More has

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[10] *Christ the Word,* 281.

[11] *Ibid.,* 287-288.

[12] *Ibid.,* 299.

[13] *Ibid.,* 300. The quotation is More's summary of a quotation given in full on page 9 of his book. The original is in Justin's *Apology,* II, x.

[14] *Ibid.,* 305.

been recounted here as his fullest and ultimate description of what in his earlier writings he designated simply as the "inner check." The restraining influence which man feels within himself is man's participation in Divine purpose. Man intuits this purpose though he may not be able to explain it; nevertheless he is free to coöperate with it or not. Resistance is an insult to God and a sin to man. The consciousness of this purpose has been so darkened by original sin that man needs a more direct illumination than that afforded by the logical order of nature, hence God sent the light of revelation into the world that man might better know his purpose. When the revelations through the prophets and lawgivers became dim, God sent His own Son that man might have a perfect pattern of the way of life proper to him. Therefore More has broadened his humanism with his acceptance of the Christian Religion. Man need not spend his strength in trying to discern the promptings of the inner check if he has a perfect pattern before his eyes. Yet man, even the religious, must not lose sight of this inner purpose. Let us listen to More as he classifies thinkers on this subject:

There are those who fail to perceive in their own consciousness anything more than a vortex of sensations cohering together for a few years about some shadowery centre of gravitation, why no one can guess, and then losing themselves forever in the stream of phenomena that flows on and on to no conceivable goal. To talk of purpose in a world so constituted is mockery. For such men, if they have the courage of their conviction, I do not see what reasonable creed is left but that of the Epicurean: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

Again there are those for whom this visible universe is no more than an ocean of ephemeral illusions, but who nevertheless have no doubt of a spiritual law holding irresistible and relentless sway in its own separate sphere. The call within to exercise the ethical will is clear and peremptory, yet all the desires and activities connected with this transitory life are frustrate from their inception and end at last in nothing, meaningless all as is the very principle of individual consciousness. For these men I do not see what resting place remains short of the absolute mysticism of India. . . .

Lastly there are those who admit no such limitation to the law of purpose, but from all they learn, within and without, infer the being of a Divine Builder, whose voice they think they hear calling them to labour with Him in the execution of a great and difficult de-

> sign. For then this transient life is replete with lessons of infinite purport, and the outspread glories of this world, through the impediments of imperfection, bear to the discerning eye "authentic tidings of invisible things." These men whatever their professed creed, belong to the Greek tradition, as followers of Plato and as believers in the incarnate logos; if they hesitate to associate that belief with the ecclesiastical dogma of Christ the Word, they have at least the *anima naturaliter christiana.*[15]

In this passage More does not name Babbitt as belonging to the second class described above; but his mention here of the "ethical will," Babbitt's pet phrase, and a similar passage in a later essay warrant us for drawing the conclusion that he meant Babbitt. Compare the following evaluation of Babbitt's humanism:

> The intuition of free will; free will exercised for a purpose; purpose directed to clothe human life with value; value measured by happiness—the chain is perfect, link by link, only at the end it seems to be attached to nothing. And so I ask myself, reluctantly, almost wishing my answer were mistaken, whether those who advocate humanism as an isolated movement, are not doomed to disappointment. It is not that the direction in itself is wrong; every step in the program is right, and only by this path can we escape from the wasteland of naturalism. But can we stop here in security? For purpose that will not end in defeat; for values that will not mock us like empty masks must we not look for a happiness based on something beyond the swaying of tides of mortal success and failure? Will not the humanist, unless he adds to his creed the faith and hope of religion, find himself at the last, despite his protests, dragged back into the camp of the naturalists? [16]

Dr. More does not believe that man's last end is happiness in this life. He does not believe that the problem of purpose and values can be so simplified. Man cannot be wholly happy here; happiness, if it is to be obtained at all must be sought above the human level. If man can obtain here and now such happiness as the mere humanist maintains may be gained by heeding the inner monitor, how much greater and perfectly satisfying will be the happiness of perfect knowledge and perfect conformity attain-

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[15] *Ibid.*, 327-328.

[16] P. E. More, "A Revival of Humanism" in *Bookman,* March, 1930.

able by the immortal soul in the home of eternal truth.

Humanism without religion, More would say, is futile yet each can greatly aid the other; perhaps it would be better expressed by saying that Humanism must be religious and religion must be humanistic.

Man, then, for Dr. More, is a rational animal in whom there dwells an inner purpose which he can consciously recognize and consciously follow. In this life the following is made secure only with the help of religion. If man is to be truly human he must also be religious. There is need now for us to inquire what More means by religion and religious.

In his examination of the religion of Plato, More distinguishes three component elements of religion, philosophy, theology, mythology. He does not believe that any one of these alone is religion:

> Not philosophy, which, pursued separately, leaves the soul friendless in a world of austere impersonal law; not theology, which of itself is in danger of forgetting the eternal primacy of the moral law; not mythology alone, which too easily falls into a vain, even degrading, superstition. Nor yet is religion a mechanical juxtaposition of the three, but an emotion, an aspiration, a faith, a knowledge, a life, a something born of their intimate union and coöperation.[17]

The religious life begins with the recognition of man's dual nature, and the consequent subduing of the lower part to master part, the soul. To honor the soul is to make righteousness the end of life, and the reward at once and measure of righteousness is happiness. But happiness here is "entangled in a vast network of pleasures, some of them strangely like happiness, others appearing as hideous caricatures of it . . . To see clearly in this confusion of feelings requires the last refinement of wisdom, a self-knowledge which comes only after much introspection and abstinence, or sometimes, as Plato would say, by a divine gift. And, again, righteousness is so involved in artificial standards of virtue as to seem to all but the most steadfast souls itself no more than a product of ever-shifting opinion. Only when happi-

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[17] *The Religion of Plato,* 278.

ness has been distinguished from pleasure and confirmed by self-knowledge will righteousness be set free from the flux of opinions of right as wrong as a truth immutable and eternal, a law not made by man or subject to his choice, not even definable by man in its essential nature though still discoverable everywhere in its operation."[18] In religion man's happiness is subordinated to the honor of the "divine soul whom we call God; for God is greater than man." Hence man will be filled with awe and admiration of the divine nature; he will desire to be beloved of God even as he loves God, and will endeavor to make himself worthy of God's love by imitation of God's holiness.[19]

Dr. More summarizes the ethics of Plato with the phrase, *To be strong unto measuredness,* or in Jowett's translation, *Hold out and observe moderation.* This is the "law of measure" which both Babbitt and More declare to be the supreme law of life. Babbitt accepted it from Aristotle; More prefers Plato's explanation in which man is not struggling without the interest of an indifferent First Cause, but is coöperating with a provident God in imposing measure and limit upon the naturally unlimited. More writes "Our search for happiness in justice and temperance is no longer an isolated act subject to the charge of insignificance, but becomes part of the divine drama of the world; for by introducing measure into our own unruly members we are imitating God and helping in that endless labour of force and persuasion by which chaos is kept in bounds."[20]

In this sense *God is the measure of all things;* and More explains this by saying that for us God is the measure of conduct, as in the creation and conduct of the world he is the source and power of measure. Man is a measure by participation, not as the naturalist would say who denies the existence of that element of man's composite being which the humanist affirms to be the normal standard of measurement.[21] This standard is the law of his purpose. "Our conscience," More tells us, "dwells face to face with those everlasting laws to which the Antigone of Sophocles appealed against the tyranny of appearances:

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[18] *Ibid.,* 279-280.

[19] *Ibid.,* 281.

[20] *The Religion of Plato,* 286.

[21] "The Revival of Humanism."

> The unwritten statutes, ever fixed on high,
> Which none of mortal heritage can deny;
> For not of yesterday but to all years
> Their birth, and no man knoweth whence or why."[22]

And this law is no mere categorical imperative severing the moral sense from the desire of happiness and declaring that we must do our duty with no thought of the consequences to ourselves. The Categorical Imperative, More says, is "the emptiest of metaphysics, meaningless at the best, fraught with a base cargo of hypocrisies at the worst."[23]

On the contrary man is a free agent responsible for his acts; being subject to the law, he should also be in unison with God whose word the law is. Dr. More says that the question of the freedom of the will was forced into the domain of theology by the desire to vindicate God from the imputation of evil and to hold man accountable for his actions. He adds:

> And the problem of philosophic dualism goes back to the same instinctive belief in human responsibility. If a man is responsible for his acts, then he must have been free to choose between conflicting impulses; and . . . this freedom can exist only by virtue of an inhibitive power of the soul, the so-called will to refrain, entirely distinct from the positive will which is determined by the final predominance of one impulse over another. The admission of responsibility thus throws us back upon a radical psychological dualism and upon a cosmic dualism of good and evil as its counterpart. But the sense of responsibility itself springs from our immediate feelings of happiness and misery. It is of the essence of these feelings, as distinguished from pleasure and pain, that we are conscious of them as dependent upon ourselves and not upon circumstances; we are happy with the knowledge that we have chosen to act after due exercise of the inhibiting power, we are miserable with the knowledge that we have not so chosen. Thus, the consciousness of happiness and misery brings with it a sense of responsibility; the sense of responsibility leads us to a belief in the freedom of the will; the freedom of the will forces us to accept a radical dualism, psychological and cosmic.[24]

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[22] *The Demon of the Absolute,* 106.

[23] *Christ of the New Testament* (Princeton; Princeton University Press, 1924), 218.

[24] *Platonism* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1917), 150.

Though Dr. More speaks with deep regard for the Roman Catholic Church he objects to her dogmatism. He prefers to remain a critical individualist in matters of faith and morals, as well as in philosophy. He professes the Apostles' Creed, yet he does not accept all of its articles literally. His latest book, *The Catholic Faith,* is a testimony to the dangers of private judgment. If we were to use his method of individual interpretation we would soon find ourselves swamped in modernism. If Dr. More believes that God sent His only begotten Son to redeem mankind and to give man a clearer knowledge of his purpose, he should likewise maintain that Christ's promises have not been in vain and that the authority which he invested in the Church was not an idle gesture but a safeguard of His eternal Truth, an infallible guide to faith and morals. Dr. More is humble enough to revise his opinions. He has acknowledged in the past that his Humanism was incomplete without religion; perhaps further study will convince him that his religion is incomplete without the rockbed foundation of Rome.

Let us close this section with a statement from Dr. More on the life of man as a Christian. His study of the histories of many religions has convinced him that man may run the gamut from basest naturism to the heights of mysticism. The "mystic" may be a fanatic, or he may be the favored of God. Yet all are not called to the heights of mysticism; the vocation of the ordinary Christian is still a heroic act of faith and a noble endeavor:

> To believe seriously in the otherworld of God and Ideas, to lift the mind habitually to the contemplation of supernatural realities until it learns of a certainty that its home is there, to live in that realm wholeheartedly, yet without shirking or denying the claims of nature, to centre the distracted will upon God as the King of righteousness, to see in this maze of gliding phenomena, or to know without seeing, the obscured presence of veritable justice and beauty, to retain faith in a divine purpose at work within the world despite all the persuasions of infinite illusion, to take one's part valiantly in the eternal conflict of truth—that is not a light choice or a feeble task. Against the temptation to sink below this mediatorial plane we have, to him who listens, a clear call of the spirit; the ambition to rise, here and now, into what allures us as a higher plane is equally a temptation, however it be disguised.[25]

[25] *The Catholic Faith,* 312.

This is the religious and humanistic mediation which More opposes to an excess of naturalism on the one hand, and an excess of mysticism on the other.

CHAPTER V

The Scholastic Concept of Man

One may be surprised to find among the names of humanists of the present day reference to such eminent Catholic writers as Gilbert K. Chesterton and Jacques Maritain. Do they subscribe to any of the types of Humanism that we have been reviewing? Certainly no; however much anxious protagonists of Humanism might want us to believe so. Yet Maritain does expound a Humanism, Chesterton is keenly interested in man, Gilson even writes of "The Humanism of St. Thomas;"[1] but the Humanism of which these men speak differs widely from most of the American brands. First of all it is theocentric not anthropocentric. It antedates the Renaissance and will outlive the contemporary revival of renaissance technique. Maritain declares:

> We mean an authentic humanism of which St. Thomas Aquinas and St. John of the Cross are the great teachers, a humanism which is salutary for man and human things because it does not suffer any diminution of divine truths, and assimilates the whole of things human to the folly of the Cross and to the mystery of the Ecce Homo, Behold the Man: this humanism knows that man conforms to the God-Man by human participation in the divine life.[2]

It is this Humanism that we proceed to set forth now. St. Thomas, like Aristotle, defines man as a rational animal, yet if we try to summarize his treatise *De Homine*[3] in a form of an answer to the question What is man?—the most compact reply may be found in the wording of the little catechism: Man is a creature composed of body and soul, and made to the image and likeness of God. St. Thomas treats of man, who is composed of a spiritual and a corporeal substance. He explains the nature of

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[1] Etienne Gilson, "L'Humanisme de St. Thomas d'Aquin," in *Atti del Quinto Congresso Internazionale Filosofia* (Naples, 1924).

[2] J. Maritain, *Some Reflections on Culture and Liberty* (Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1933), 3.

[3] *Sum. Theol.* I, qq. 75-119.

man and his origin and, after proving the soul to be the substantial form of the body, he discusses the powers and operations of this spiritual principle. He concludes with an exposition of the creation of the first man. St. Thomas does not confine himself to mere nature; he describes man as elevated by grace such as he left the hands of his Creator to whose image and likeness he was made. In the second part of the *Summa Theologica* St. Thomas uses as premises the conclusions he has established here. His whole ethical system is based upon his understanding of the nature of man. From the nature of man he concludes the end of man; from the nature of man he concludes the means whereby he may attain that end. This is a philosophy of life, a philosophy in which the study of mankind is indeed man. But above all Thomistic philosophy is theocentric, though man may occupy a central position among created things. Let us first then summarize the proofs which St. Thomas gives for the existence of God.[4] That God exists we do not know by immediate intuition, nor do we demonstrate it a priori, but certainly a posteriori, that is by things that are made, arguing from effect to cause. Namely, from things which are in movement and cannot be the adequate principle of the motion, to the first mover immovable; from the procession of worldly things from causes, which are subordinated to each other, to the first uncaused cause; from corruptible things which are indifferent alike to being and non-being, to the absolutely necessary being; from things, which according to their limited perfection of existence, life, intelligence, are more or less perfect in their being, their life, their intelligence, to Him who is intelligent, living, and being in the highest degree; finally, from the order, which exists in the universe, to the existence of a separate intelligence which ordained, disposed, and directs things to their end.

God exists. He is the Creator and Author of all things. Man is one of His creatures. Man might be said to occupy a central place in creation; he is, as it were, a microcosm, a little world in whom all the orders of creations meet. "Man in a certain sense contains all things . . . Now we may consider four things in man: his *reason,* which makes him like to the angels; his

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[4] *Ibid.,* I, p. 2, art. 3.

sensitive powers, whereby he is like the animals; his *natural forces,* which liken him to the plant; and the *body* itself wherein he is like to inanimate things."[5]

In man the world of spirit comes into contact with conscious matter; for, man bridges the world of spirit and the world of sense. St. Thomas follows Aristotle in thus placing man at the meeting point of spirit and matter. He uses Aristotle's principle of hylomorphism to explain the union of the spiritual and the corporeal in man, the human compound, who is neither a pure spirit nor a beast, "ni un ange incarné, ni une bête arrivée" but who occupies a unique status in the scale of being.

Man is composed of body and soul. He is not soul alone, nor body alone, nor a juxtaposition of the two. Man is one complete substance in which the soul is one, simple, incorruptible, substantial form of the body.

What is it that marks man as specifically human? "The proper operation of man is to understand; because he thereby surpasses all other animals."[6] "The notion of animal is taken from the sensitive part, whereas the notion of man is taken from the intellectual part."[7] "Properly speaking man is that which is according to reason. Wherefore from the very fact that man holds *(tenet se)* to that which is in accord with reason, he is said to contain himself."[8] Hence man is said to be a rational animal. His soul, an intellectual form, is virtually vegetative and sentient. It is the animating principle of the whole man. Our purpose here, however, is not to examine those functions

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[5] *Sum. Theol.* I. p. 96, art. 2, c. "In homine quodammodo sunt omnia . . . Est autem in homine quatuor considerare, scilicet rationem, secundum quam convenit cum angelis, vires sensitivas, secundum quas convenit cum animalibus; vires naturales, secundum quas convenit cum plantis, et ipsum corpus, secundum quod convenit cum rebus inanimatis." *Cf.* also I, q. 91, art. 1, c; I-II, q. 17, art. 8, ad 2.

[6] *Ibid.,* I, q. 76, art. 1, c. "Propria autem operatio hominis, inquantum est homo, est intelligere; per hanc enim omnia alia animalia transcendit."

[7] *Ibid.,* I, q. 85, art. 3, ad 4. ". . . ratio animalis a sensitivo, ratio vero hominis ab intellectivo."

[8] *Ibid,* II-II, q. 155, art. 1, ad 2. "Homo proprie est id quod est secundum rationem. Et ideo ex hoc dicitur aliquis in seipso se tenere, quod tenet se in eo quod convenit rationi."

which man has in common with the lower orders of creation but to note what marks him off as specifically human; consequently, we concentrate upon the intellectual faculties. Now these faculties are intellect and will. The intellect is the cognitive faculty, the power that actively illumines the things of sense, abstracts the universal forms from particular objects, and passively represents these immaterially within itself; hence the soul itself must be immaterial, and since it has this operation *per se* apart from the body it must be subsistent.[9] Moreover from the same operation we may conclude that the soul is one, simple, incorruptible and therefore naturally immortal, substantial form of the body. Now every form has also a corresponding appetency; in man this appetency is rational, hence we call it the rational appetency, or will. The object of the intellect is truth; the object of the will is the good.

It is the same power that simply apprehends, judges and reasons. When we speak of man's reason, we do not refer to a faculty distinct from intellect, "For to understand is simply to apprehend intelligible truth: and to reason is to advance from one thing understood to another, so as to know an intelligible truth. And therefore angels, who according to their nature, possess perfect knowledge of intelligible truth, have no need to advance from one thing to another; but apprehend the truth simply and without mental discussion . . . But man arrives at the knowledge of intelligible truth by advancing from one thing to another; and therefore he is called rational."[10] By this very fact man is the lowest in the order of intelligences just as he is the highest in the order of material creation. Again we note the union of matter and spirit that gives centrality to man. In this sense only can he be said to be the measure of all things.

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[9] *Sum. Theol.* I, q. 75, art. 2, c.

[10] *Ibid.,* I. q. 79, art. 8, c. "Intelligere enim est simpliciter veritatem intelligibilem apprehendere; ratiocinari autem est procedere de uno intellecto ad aliud, ad veritatem intelligibilem cognoscendam. Et, ideo angeli qui perfecto possident, secundum modum suae naturae, cognitionem intelligibilis veritatis, non habent necesse procedere de uno ad aliud. . . . Homines autem ad intelligibilem veritatem cognoscendam perveniunt procendendo de uno ad aliud, et ideo rationales dicuntur."

Nor are will and free-will distinct from each other. By free-will we denote the will's power of choice:

> The appetitive powers must be proportionate to the apprehensive powers. . . . Now, as on the part of the intellectual apprehension we have intellect and reason, so on the part of the intellectual appetite we have will, and free-will which is nothing else but the power of choice. And this is clear from their relations to their respective objects and acts. For the act of *understanding* implies the simple acceptation of something; whence we say that we understand first principles, which are known of themselves without any comparison. But to *reason,* properly speaking, is to come from one thing to the knowledge of another: wherefore, properly speaking we reason about conclusions, which are known from the principles. In like manner on the part of the appetite to *will* implies the simple appetite for something: wherefore the will is said to regard the end, which is desired for itself. But to choose is to desire something for the sake of obtaining something else: wherefore properly speaking it regards the means to the end. Now in matters of knowledge, the principles are related to the conclusion to which we assent on account of the principles: just as in appetitive matters, the end is related to the means, which is desired on account of the end. Wherefore it is evident that as the intellect is to reason, so is the will to the power of choice, which is free-will. But it has been shown above (Q. LXXIX, A. 8) that it belongs to the same power both to understand and to reason even as it belongs to the same power to be at rest and to be in movement. Wherefore it belongs also to the same power to will and to choose: and on this account the will and the free-will are not two powers, but one.[11]

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[11] *Sum. Theol.* I, q. 83, art. 4, c. "Potentias appetitivas oportet esse proportionatas potentiis apprehensivis. . . . Sicut autem ex parte apprehensionis intellectivae se habent intellectus et ratio; ita ex parte appetitus intellectivi se habent voluntas et liberum arbitrium, quod nihil aliud est quam vis electiva. Et hoc patet habitudine et objectorum et actuum. Nam intelligere importat simplicem acceptionem alicujus rei; unde intelligi dicuntur proprie principia quae sine collatione per seipsa cognoscuntur. Ratiocinari autem proprie est devenire ex uno in cognitionem alterius. Unde proprie de conclusionibus ratiocinamur, quae ex principiis innotescunt. Similiter ex parte appetitus velle importat simplicem appetitum alicujus rei; unde voluntas dicitur esse de fine, qui propter se appetitur. Eligere autem est appetere aliquid propter alterum consequendum; unde proprie est eorum quae sunt ad finem. Sicut autem se habet in cognitivis principium ad conclusionem, cui propter principia assentimur; ita in appetitivis se habet finis ad ea quae sunt ad finem, quae propter finem appetuntur. Unde manifestum est quod

We have quoted this passage in full not simply to show the clarity of St. Thomas's thought and the symmetry of his system, though it is a beautiful example of both, but because we wish to show that those of our contemporary humanists who have thought to explain man better by multiplying his powers, have not really come upon new powers, but have simply analyzed those traditionally assigned to him.

It is the happiest stroke of humanism that it admits that man is free. We need enter into no long proofs of freedom here; but it is necessary to explain that freedom, in the Scholastic sense, does not mean the throwing off of all restraint, nor the right to individual autonomy in all things, however temperate or "measured" a man may be. Morality and freedom are intimately related. Man must act; he must act for an end, and in order to do so he must choose means. In other words the will is determined always to seek the good as the reason of its acts, yet the will is never determined from the outside to choose any particular means to arrive at the good. There is no morality on the animal level because the animal is determined both in end and in means; morality implies imputability, and only free agents are responsible. Still obedience to law is the condition of freedom. If we wish to attain an end, we must make use of the means appropriate to that end. Man, then, in tending to his last end must choose the proper means to attain that end.

What is man's last end? Instead of going through the usual process of elimination to answer this question let us recall the ends proposed by our present day humanists. The "Religious Humanists" say that man is his own end. St. Thomas would reply that in a secondary sense this is true because the essence of formal human happiness must be found in man. But there must be an object that can perfectly satisfy man. No created good will do this; for, the intellect seeks infinite Truth, and the will, infinite Good.

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sicut se habet intellectus ad rationem, eta se habet voluntas ad vim electivam, id est ad liberum arbitrium. Ostensum est autem supra, quod ejusdem potentiae est intelligere et ratiocinari, sicut ejusdem virtutis est quiescere et moveri: unde etiam ejusdem potentiae est velle et eligere. Et propter hoc voluntas et liberum arbitrium non sunt duae potentia, sed una."

> In the first sense, then, man's last end is the uncreated good, namely God, Who alone by His infinite goodness can perfectly satisfy man's will. But in the second way, man's last end is something created, existing in him, and this is nothing else than the attainment or enjoyment of the last end. Now man's last end is called happiness. If, therefore, we consider man's happiness in its cause or object, then it is something uncreated; but if we consider it as to the very essence of happiness, then it is something created.[12]

Babbitt maintained that the end of man consists in the happiness resultant upon the poise of proportionate living attained by the observance of the law of measure. St. Thomas would reply

> The purpose of the moral virtues is that through them we may observe the mean in the passions within us, and in things outside us. Now it is impossible that the moderation of passions or of external things be the ultimate end of man's life; since both passions and external things can be directed to something else. Therefore it is not possible that the practice of moral virtue be man's final happiness.[13]

God is the last end of all things, all things tend to be like unto God;[14] and each thing imitates the Divine goodness according to its mode. Man's proper perfections are intellect and will hence the end of man is to know God and to love God; but love follows knowledge, so we may say simply that man's last end is the con-

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[12] *Sum. Theol.* I-II, q. 3, art. 1, c. "Primo ergo modo ultimus hominis finis est bonum increatum, scilicet Deus, qui solus sua infinita bonitate potest voluntatem hominis perfecto implere. Secundo autem modo ultimus finis hominis est creatum aliquid in ipso existens; quod nihil est aliud quam adeptio vel fruitio finis ultimi. Ultimus autem finis vocatur beatitudo. Si ergo beatitudo hominis consideretur quantum ad causam vel objectum, sic est aliquid increatum; si autem consideretur quantum ad ipsam essentiam beatitudinis, sic est aliquid creatum."

[13] *Contra Gentiles,* III, Ch. 34. "Virtutes morales ad hoc sunt ut per eas conservetur medium in passionibus intrinsecis et exterioribus rebus. Non est autem possibile quod modificatio passionum vel rerum exteriorum sit ultimus finis humanae vitae, quum ipsae passiones et exteriores res sint ad aliud ordinabiles. Non est possibile quod in actibus virtutum moralium sit ultima hominis felicitas."

[14] *Ibid.,* Ch. 18, 19, 20.

templation of God, in this consists his ultimate happiness.[15]

But no created substance can by its natural power arrive at seeing God in His Essence. And here we come to the meaning of grace. In creating man God knew the end of man. Now though man's unaided intellect can know the truth, can even arrive at a natural knowledge of God, and though man's unaided will can naturally desire the greatest good, man needs a special help to maintain rectitude in this life and a special light by which to contemplate Eternal Truth in the next. From the first moment of creation God gave man this help; man forfeited it by sin. Original sin did not destroy nor intrinsically corrupt the nature of man, as Christian heretics have taught, but it deprived it of supernatural help. By the Redemption Christ brought back the supernatural to man. Man can again become master of his nature by imposing on the universe of his own internal energies the law of reason, of reason aided by grace. Now the supernatural may be defined as a gratuitous gift of God superadded to the nature of a rational being, *"Donum Dei naturae indebitum et superadditum."* And there are two gifts of God which are supernatural in the strict sense, and therefore belong to the Divine order, namely, beatific vision and the state of grace. In order to enjoy grace in this life man must have recourse to the channels of grace that Christ has instituted in His Church. Only by so doing can he dispose himself for the work of salvation, and only salvation will bring him the further gift of the beatific vision. Grace will perfect nature.

> The distinction between the two orders of nature and grace is not a separation. In the present order of things the natural end has been absorbed in a higher supernatural destiny. This has been rendered possible by Jesus Christ, and the present order is a Christian Order. The coming of Christ has modified things. And the moment the supernatural exists it becomes the human order, that in which human life is designed by God to grow and develop. The supernatural is no more juridic or extrinsic denomination: it enters into creation and modifies its shape and contour, and in the light of a unique supernatural destiny, which is obligatory for all, it imparts to human life a unitary orientation. Man is not born first to lead a natural life and then a supernatural life; he is called to a life that is

[15] *Ibid.*, III, Ch. 37.

> supernatural and to a destiny that is unique and obligatory. As there is only one life there can be only one ultimate rule of life and one ultimate morality which is Christian.[16]

This is the true dualism between the natural and the supernatural. However since man is both spirit and matter we may admit in man another dual aspect which accounts for the inner conflict upon which Babbitt and More insist. For, says St. Thomas:

> The sensitive appetite is naturally moved, not only by the estimative power in other animals, and in man by the cogitative power which universal reason guides, but also by the imagination and sense. Whence it is that we experience that the irascible and the concupiscible powers do resist reason, inasmuch as we sense or imagine something pleasant, which reason forbids, or unpleasant which reason commands.[17]

This was not the case in the preternatural state of the first man before the Fall, for his lower powers were completely submissive to his higher faculties. The presence of sin disturbed this balance of power in the first man and through him, in all men. Man's life is indeed a conflict which will only cease when he attains rest and perfect happiness in the possession of the All Good and the All Truth, which is God. This is the end comformable to his nature and the reward promised to all who live conformably to this nature. The first principles of the eternal law of God as applied to man are made known to man by the light of his own reason; by that same reason man can derive the means appropriate to his walk in life, he can know supersensible things and even God Himself.[16] Scholasticism never disparages man's

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[16] Rev. Fr. James, O. M. Cap., "The Criteria of Morality" in *Moral Principles and Practice,* Papers read at the Summer School of Catholic Studies held at Cambridge, 1932. Ed. by Rev. G. J. MacGillivary (London, Sheed and Ward, 1932), 47.

[17] *Sum. Theol.* I, q. 81, art. 3, ad 2. "Natus est enim moveri appetitus sensitivus non solum ab aestimativa in aliis animalibus, et cogitativa in homine, quam dirigit universalis ratio, set etiam ab imaginativa et sensu. Unde experimur irascibilem vel concupiscibilem rationi repugnare, per hoc quod sentimus vel imaginamur aliquod delectabile quod ratio vetat, vel triste quod ratio praecipit."

natural powers. The fact that it acknowledges the natural integrity of the great Greek philosophers and has made their teachings part of its own, is an admission of the value that it places on pure reason. Yet, Gilson has aptly said:

> Avec ou sans Aristote, l'homme peut se sauver, car ce n'est pas Aristote, c'est Jésus-Christ qui lui apporte le salut. Lorsque le théologien scolastique s'efforçait d'interpréter la philosophie grecque en la situant dans l'histoire par rapport à la révélation, elle soulevait donc pour lui ce paradoxe: éclatante supériorité de la raison humaine prise à l'état pur dans le domaine de la philosophie, puisque pour un saint Thomas comme pour un Albert le Grand, c'est Aristote qui reste le philosophie; mais éclatante supériorité de la révelation chrétienne dans la domaine religieux, où elle maîtresse souveraine et dispensatrice des grâces qui conduisent au salut. Ce paradoxe, dont on peut dire qu'il fut un objet constant de méditation pour les penseurs chrétiens depuis le II siècle, saint Thomas l'a considéré comme une expérience instituée dans l'histoire par la Providence, et il s'est efforcé de construire une notion de l'homme assez comprehensive pour pouvoir l'interpréter.[18]

St. Thomas pointed out the way between Rationalism and Traditionalism. He says that without the aid of Revelation the truth could be known only by a few, after a long time, and with the admixture of many errors. Some of our modern Humanists are men of eminent erudition, but even if their Humanism were complete, would it be arrived at by "all men, without delay, with certitude and without admixture of error?" Reason and Revelation are efficient standards, one will not contradict the other. Babbitt even wrote, "In fact under certain conditions already partly in sight, the Catholic Church may perhaps be the only institution left in the Occident that can be counted on to uphold standards."[19]

Babbitt and More have gone far in formulating a valid ethos in an age that is chiefly dominated by a cynical materialism. As Chesterton says: "We need a rally of the really *human* things; will, which is morals, memory which is tradition, culture which is

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[18] E. Gilson, "L'humanisme de Saint Thomas" *Atti del Quinto Congresso internazionale di Filosofia,* (Naples, 1924).

[19] "Humanism: An Essay at Definition" in *Humanism and America.*

the mental thrift of our fathers."[20] But we need even more the stabilizing influence, the synthetic integration which Christian tradition alone can offer.

> Because the intellectual seeing of God is to bring human nature to the very peak of its expression and wholly to actualize this "humanity," which is otherwise realized but brokenly, we are sure that, by gathering them up and bringing them to a pointed perfection, happiness will warrant all the acts, all the desires, all the joys which, agreeing with the noblest and most "human" needs of our nature, are beforehand like the state of the soul whose boundless hopes will be at last fulfilled. This is why no moral system merits better than that of Thomas the epithet "humanistic," and without the slightest paradox we may describe Thomism as an integral humanism.[21]

In the writings of St. Thomas we find a synthesis which, the Church admits, has never been surpassed. Thomism has all that Humanism has and more. It brings man to the height of Humanism made possible by a God Who, by a master stroke of Humanism, became Man to make Man realize his human dignity and to give to man a Model, a Standard, of the perfect life.

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[20] G. K. Chesterton, "Is Humanism a Religion?" in *Bookman,* May, 1929.

[21] E. Gilson, *Moral Values and the Moral Life.* Translated by Leo Richard Ward, C. S. C. (St. Louis, Herder, 1931), 48.

CONCLUSION

Our examination of Humanism in America has revealed that it is not a unified movement and that therefore it is necessary to distinguish its different types. While the Humanists roughly distinguish themselves as "Religious" and "Literary." We believe that they may be better distinguished by their concepts of man. In summary these concepts are as follows:

I. That conceived by the "Religious Humanists:" Man is a part of nature and has emerged as a result of a continuous process. There is in him no dualism of mind and body. He has no supernatural or cosmic guarantee of his human values, for there is no personal God and the cosmos is indifferent to its emergents. The complete realization of human personality, the end of man's life, can be obtained in the here and now. His religion excludes the old attitudes involved in worship and prayer; his religious emotion is expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and a coöperative effort to promote social well-being. He alone is responsible for the realization of his world of dreams and he has within him the power of its achievement.

II. That conceived by Irving Babbitt: Man is more than a rational animal; he has within him powers which transcend his natural reason and will. These faculties are the higher imagination, the power which grasps the universal, and the higher will, a principle of inner control. His end, his happiness (in this life, for Babbitt speaks of no other) consists in the poise of proportionate living achieved by observing the law of measure.

III. That conceived by Paul Elmer More: Man is a rational animal in whom there dwells an inner purpose which he can consciously recognize and consciously follow. In this life the following is made secure only with the help of religion. If man is to be truly human he must also be religious. Man's last end is the happiness consequent upon the contemplation of Eternal Truth in God. He may know this end and achieve this end while remaining a critical and religious individualist.

In evaluating any system of thought we inquire first its *raison d'être,* the ends it proposes to accomplish, and the basis of ground-

work upon which it has to work. When a system is new and we can only predict whether or not its aims can be attained, our prediction rests upon the adequacy or inadequacy of these notions. Now, the reason which our humanists assign for presenting a new program of life is that they have found existing codes derogatory to the dignity of man. The chief ends which they aim to reach are a reassertion of human dignity and a complete development of human personality. The basis of all their endeavor is man himself. Since upon this depends the whole humanistic structure, we have made their concept of man the object of our study. How, then, do their concepts of man affect the soundness of their system?

Let us consider first the reason for Humanism. Why Humanism? All types of Humanism agree that the naturalism bequeathed to us by the last two centuries does not tell the whole story of human life. Man must be more than a being of a piece with the rest of nature, and in this more his dignity consists. We can agree most heartily with this; and if naturalism were the only alternative to Humanism we could accept the challenge and fight in the ranks of Humanism. There is, however, another alternative to be reckoned with—Christian supernaturalism. On this point our humanists differ. The "religious humanists" openly revolt against dogma and only grudgingly condone a naïve acceptance of Christian tradition. Irving Babbitt, while not openly hostile to theism and Christian doctrine, implies that without them the good life may still be ours. Paul Elmer More recognizes rightly that the only alternative to naturalism is Christian Theism but he still insists that Christianity can benefit by humanistic technique.

The end of humanism is variously expressed as the complete development of human personality, or poised and proportionate living. Either of these aims might be considered laudable enough if interpreted in the Christian sense and based upon a true concept of man. But the "religious humanists" offer no advance in aim upon Spencer's aim of "complete living" for, like the naturalists, they only recommend that man should be a good animal. Irving Babbitt finds in man an inner control motivating him to a higher plane of living. This is a commendable recognition; but, as our analysis has shown, this power, though called supernatural,

or superrational, by him is never admitted to be superhuman. Man cannot rise above himself by a push from beneath or by his own concentrated activity. There must be some lift from above. Babbitt's denial of the real supernatural would leave man entirely on his own resources. Paul Elmer More recognized this inadequacy in Humanism. If he clings to Humanism it must be because he has not yet found a form of Christianity which includes the best that Humanism has to offer. The Catholic Church in its official philosophy, Scholasticism, delineates a truer picture of man. The rounded view which we have presented in our chapter on the scholastic concept of man, far from robbing man of his rightful dignity emphasizes that by nature and election man stands at the peak of material creation; moreover, it points out for man the means whereby he may gain his supernatural destiny.

Why have these humanists rejected the scholastic concept of man? Because this concept was formulated centuries ago is no criterion of its soundness. Science may seem to have transformed the face of the earth in the intervening years. Indeed it has even thrown greater light on the material part of man. Anatomy has bared the structure of man; physiology has explained its functionings; psychology has traced and catalogued the units and pathways of behaviour; sociology has brought to light the typical adjustments that man makes in the company of his fellow beings. But no scientist claims that human nature as such has changed. Our humanists confess and deplore this fact. Whatever it is today, they admit it has always been. The crux of the whole argument lies therefore in the definition of human nature. Since Descartes cleaved the chasm between soul and body, definition of man has become increasingly difficult precisely because the definers try to make it too simple. To describe man as soul alone, or as body alone, might simplify the expression but it would necessitate complex explanations of human activity which fly in the face of experience.

True progress is not always attained by discarding the old. Often it rather entails a coming back to a vantage point and, after deliberation, making a fresh start. This is the course that we recommend to the humanists. Scholastic philosophy is one with Humanism in insisting on human dignity and worth. It also aims at the fullest development of human personality, it is just

as fond of the golden mean, it believes that its concept of man provides for the highest form of human living. Humanists might examine this concept with great profit, note its difference from Jansenist and Puritan shortcomings, and compare it with their own. The philosophy of St. Thomas offers the purest expression of the concept of man.

Each of the humanistic concepts, as we have pointed out, is in its own way incomplete. While that of Babbitt marks a great advance from that of the "Religious Humanists" because it recognizes man as more than, and different in kind from, the animal, his Humanism falls short of Dr. More's which attests to man's need of the supernatural. Dr. More, however, places too much confidence in man when he leaves him without an infallible guide to salvation. His individualism in faith and morals only brings us back to the gateway of all the errors of modernism and destroys any hope of Humanism as *via media* towards complete life.

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